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BY

REYNOLD A NICHOLSON
LITT D, LL D, F B A
Sir Thomas Adams's Professor of Arabic and sometime Lecturer in Persian in the University of Cambridge

VOLUME II

CONTAINING THE TRANSLATION OF THE FIRST & SECOND BOOKS

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and to promote those researches into the History, Literature, Philosophy and Religion of the Turks, Persians and Arabs, to which, from his Youth upwards, until his premature and deeply lamented Death in his forty-fifth year, on December 5, 1901, his life was devoted

تِلْكَ آثَارُنَا تَدُلُّ عَلَيْنَا * فَانْظُرُوا بَعْدَنَا إِلَى الآثَارِ

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INTRODUCTION

THERE are complete translations of the *Mathnawí* in Turkish[1], Arabic[2], and Hindustani[3], but only the first two of the six Books of the poem have hitherto been made accessible in their entirety to European readers, though a number of extracts from Books III–VI are translated in E. H. Whinfield's useful abridgment. While it may seem surprising that a work so celebrated, and one which reflects (however darkly at times) so much of the highest as well as the lowest in the life and thought of the Mohammedan world in the later Middle Ages, should still remain imperfectly known to Western students, I think that this gap in our knowledge can at least be excused. Judged by modern standards, the *Mathnawí* is a very long poem: it contains almost as many verses as the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* together and about twice as many as the *Divina Commedia*; and these comparisons make it appear shorter than it actually is, since every verse of the *Mathnawí* has twenty-two syllables, whereas the hexameter may vary from thirteen to seventeen, and the *terza rima*, like the Spenserian stanza, admits only ten or eleven in each verse, so that the *Mathnawí* with 25,700 verses is in reality a far more extensive work than the *Faerie Queene* with 33,500. On the other hand, it is easily surpassed in length by several Persian poems; and the fact that the *Sháhnama* has been translated from beginning to end into English, French, and Italian answers the question asked by Georg Rosen—"Who would care to devote a considerable part of his lifetime to translating thirty or forty thousand Persian distichs of unequal poetical worth?" The size of the *Mathnawí* is not the chief or the worst obstacle by which its translator is confronted. He at once finds himself involved in the fundamental difficulty, from which there is no escape, that if his translation is faithful, it must be to a large extent unintelligible, and that if he tries to make it intelligible throughout he must often substitute for the exact rendering a free and copious paraphrase embodying matter which properly belongs to a commentary, though such a method cannot

[1] In prose, by Ismá'íl Anqiraví in his commentary entitled *Fátiḥu 'l-abyát* (Búláq, A.H. 1251 and Constantinople, A.H. 1289). A Turkish verse-translation by Sulaymán Naḥífí accompanies the Persian text in the Búláq edition of the *Mathnawí* (A.H. 1268). For Naḥífí (*ob.* A.H. 1151) see E. J. W. Gibb, *History of Ottoman Poetry*, vol. IV, pp. 78–85, where an account is given of the circumstances which led him to compose his version of the *Mathnawí*. Gibb's description of it as "a literal and line for line rendering" seems to me to require much qualification.

[2] In prose, by Yúsuf b. Aḥmad al-Mawlawí in his commentary entitled *al-Manhaj al-qawí* (Cairo, A.H. 1289).

[3] I do not think that a complete prose translation in Hindustani has yet appeared, but there is one in verse, entitled *Pírāhan-i Yusufí*, by Muḥammad Yúsuf 'Alí Sháh (Lucknow, 1889; Cawnpore, 1897).

satisfy any one who wants to understand the text and know what sense or senses it is capable of bearing Therefore a complete version of the *Mathnawí* means, for scientific purposes, a faithful translation supplemented by a full commentary, and considering the scarcity of competent Persian scholars in Europe, no one need wonder that the double task has not yet been accomplished The most important European translations are enumerated in the following list, which shows incidentally that the greater part of the work already done stands to the credit of this country

1 *Mesnewi oder Doppelverse des Scheich Mewlânâ Dschelâl-ed-dîn Rûmî, aus dem Persischen ubertragen von Georg Rosen* (*Leipzig*, 1849)

Being written in rhymed verse, this excellent version of about a third of Book I (vv 1–1371 in my edition) does not preserve the literal form of the original, but as a rule the meaning is given correctly even where misunderstanding would have been pardonable, while the explanatory notes keep the reader in touch with the mystical background of the poem The translator has left out a good deal—and in verse-translations of Oriental poetry this is a merit rather than a fault His book, which was reprinted in 1913 with an introduction by his son, Dr F Rosen, should help to quicken the growing interest of Germany in Persian literature

2 *The Mesnevi of Mevlānā Jelālu'd-dīn Muhammed er-Rūmī Book the First, together with some account of the life and acts of the Author, of his ancestors, and of his descendants, illustrated by a selection of characteristic anecdotes, as collected by their historian, Mevlānā Shemsu'd-dīn Ahmed el-Eflākī el-'Ārifī Translated and the poetry versified by James W Redhouse* (*London*, 1881)

Sir James Redhouse's translation of Book I is much less accurate than Rosen's Its peculiarities cause us to speculate why this eminent Turkish scholar, who was not quite at home in Persian mysticism, should have embarked upon a task so formidable, or how, with the sagacity to perceive and the candour to confess his lack of skill in versifying, he allowed himself to be misled by the idea that any kind of verse is superior to prose as a medium for the translation of poetry The excerpts from Aflakí's *Manáqibu 'l-'Árifín*, though legendary in character, supply valuable information concerning the poet and the circle of Sufís in which he lived

3 *Masnaví-i Ma'naví, the Spiritual Couplets of Mauláná Jaláluʼd-dín Muhammad Rumí, translated and abridged by E H Whinfield* (*London*, 1887, *2nd ed*, 1898)

All students of the *Mathnawí* owe gratitude to Whinfield, who was the first to analyse its contents and illustrate their rich quality by his prose translation of selected passages from the six Books,

amounting to something like 3500 verses altogether His wide and sympathetic knowledge of Oriental mysticism, already exhibited in the notes to his edition and translation of the *Gulshan-i Rdz* (1880), makes him an admirable guide through the mazes of the *Mathnawí*, and in general his work deserves the high esteem which it enjoys I do not wish to criticise it in detail and will only remark that the apparent simplicity of the Persian language is a snare for translators

آن میسّر نبود اندر عاقبت * نامِ او باشد معسّر عاقبت

4 *The Masnavi by Jalālu'd-dīn Rūmī, Book II translated for the first time from the Persian into prose, with a Commentary, by C E Wilson* (*London*, 1910)

This is "a plain literal prose translation," based on sound principles and carefully executed Comparing it with my own version of the Second Book, I found that as similar methods produce similar results the two versions often agreed almost word for word, and that where they differed, the point at issue was usually one for discussion rather than correction My obligations to Professor Wilson are not confined to the turns of phrase which I have borrowed from him now and then every translator, and particularly the translator of such a poem as the *Mathnawi*, must feel the advantage of being able to consult the work of a trustworthy predecessor who has gone step by step over the same ground

The present translation, in which the numeration of the verses corresponds with that of the text of my edition, is intended primarily as an aid to students of Persian, it is therefore as exact and faithful as I can make it, but it does not attempt to convey the inner as distinguished from the outer meaning that is to say, it gives the literal sense of the words translated without explaining either their metaphorical or their mystical sense[1] While these latter senses have sometimes been indicated by words in brackets[2], I have on the whole adhered to the principle that translation is one thing, interpretation another, and that correct interpretation depends on correct translation, just as the most fertile source of misinterpretation is inability or neglect to translate correctly It follows that a translation thus limited in scope will contain a great number of passages which do not explain themselves and cannot be fully understood without a commentary I should have preferred, as

[1] Some day I hope to try in a volume of selected passages whether a translator of the *Mathnawi* may not merit the praise which Jerome bestowed on Hilary "quasi captivos sensus in suam linguam victoris jure transposuit"

[2] Frequently too the terseness of the original demands expansion in order to bring out even the literal sense The brackets in this version mark off what belongs to a strict rendering of the original text from what has been added for the purpose of explanation I have not, however, been so pedantic as always to indicate the insertion of certain auxiliary parts of speech which an English translator would naturally use, though they are omitted in the Persian text

a matter of practical convenience, to include the commentary in the same volume as the translation, but on the other hand I saw grave objections to annotating part of the poem before the whole had been studied and translated. "The *Mathnawí*," it has been said, "is easier than easy to the ignorant, but harder than hard to the wise"[1], and I confess that for me there are still many difficulties, which may perhaps be removed by further study of the poem itself, of works historically connected with it, and of relevant Persian and Arabic literature. The Oriental commentaries, with all their shortcomings, give much help. Amongst those used in preparing this translation I have profited most by the *Fatihu 'l-abyat* (Turkish) of Ismá'íl Anqiraví and the *Sharh-i Mathnawí-yi Mawlaná-yi Rúmí* (Persian) of Walí Muhammad Akbarábádí; I have also consulted the *Mukashafát-i Radawí* (Persian) of Muhammad Ridá, the *Sharh-i Mathnawí* (Persian) of Muhammad 'Abdu 'l-'Alí, who is better known by his title of Bahru 'l-'Ulum, *al-Manhaj al-qawí* (Arabic) of Yúsuf b. Ahmad al-Mawlawí, and for Book I the *Sharh-i Mathnawí-yi Sharíf* (Turkish) of 'Ábidín Páshá.

As stated in the Introduction to the first volume, no finality is claimed for this edition. Where the text is uncertain, the translation can only be provisional; but even where we feel confidence in the text, cases occur in which every translator of the *Mathnawí* can but offer the rendering that seems to him possible or probable, and take comfort in the reflection that *est quadam prodire tenus si non datur ultra*. Some passages, I believe, will always remain mysterious, since the key to them has been lost: one knows that words uttered by a great spiritual teacher may be almost meaningless outside the group of his intimate friends and disciples, or may become so by lapse of time. The loose and rambling structure of the poem leads to other perplexities. When our author gives no sign whether he is speaking in his own person or by the voice of one of his innumerable puppets—celestial, infernal, human, or animal—who talk just like himself; when he mingles his comments with their discourse and glides imperceptibly from the narrative into the exposition; when he leaves us in doubt as to whom he is addressing or what he is describing—the translator is driven to conjecture, and on occasion must leap in the dark. Hence a translation of the *Mathnawí*, however careful it may be, is necessarily tentative in some respects and capable of being improved, though the process takes time. The corrections which I look forward to publishing at a later stage, when the commentary on this volume appears, are likely to be fewer, but also more important, than those contained in the long list of textual corrections (vol. I, pp. 21–28), three-fourths of which any reader could have made for himself.

[1] حضرت مثنوی کتابی‌است مشکلتر از مشکل و آسان‌تر از آسان،
آن بر عاقل و این بر نادان

Although the question of literary form does not enter very largely into a version so literal as this, I have attempted to preserve the idiomatic flavour of the original[1]—which can be more firmly caught and retained in a prose translation—and also its variety of style, ranging from a plain semi-colloquial manner of expression to a noble and elevated diction like that employed by the author in his mystical odes On certain topics he is too outspoken for our taste and many pages are disfigured by anecdotes worthy of an Apuleius or Petronius but scarcely fit to be translated into the language of these writers To omit them, however, would defeat the object I have in view, namely, to provide a complete version of the work which, notwithstanding the author's passion for self-effacement, reveals the breadth and depth of his genius most adequately It is important, for our comprehension of him, to know that he could tell ribald stories in the easy tone of a man of the world, and that the contrast often drawn between him and Sa'di takes no account of some marked features which the authors of the *Mathnawí* and the *Gulistán* possess in common

This is a translation for students of the text, but I venture to hope that it may attract others neither acquainted with Persian nor specially concerned with Sufism To those interested in the history of religion, morals, and culture, in fables and folklore, in divinity, philosophy, medicine, astrology and other branches of mediaeval learning, in Eastern poetry and life and manners and human nature, the *Mathnawí* should not be a sealed book, even if it cannot always be an open one

The prose headings inserted at short intervals throughout the poem, transliterated words with the exception of proper names, and all direct quotations from the Qur'án except such as occur in the headings are printed in italics A few foot-notes have been added, some of them for the benefit of the general reader

[1] It may be said that this aim is inconsistent with the translator's duty to write his own language idiomatically That is true and no compromise will unite the contraries, but I have done my best to combine them

REYNOLD A NICHOLSON

CAMBRIDGE,
December 1925

POSTSCRIPT

It would not be fitting that this volume, the first to appear in the "E J W Gibb Memorial" Series since the death of Professor E G Browne, should leave my hands without giving some expression to the great sorrow felt by the Trustees at the loss of the Scholar who presided over the foundation of the Trust, took the

chief part in organising and administering it, and for more than twenty years so fully enjoyed the confidence and affection of his surviving colleagues Amongst the works published by the Trustees or now in course of publication there are few that were not inspired, suggested, supervised, or in some way influenced by him, and his colleagues can never forget how much they have owed to his energy, enthusiasm, and experience—energy sustained by patience, enthusiasm controlled by judgement, experience as ready to acknowledge any mistake of his own as to excuse it in others The Trustees hope eventually to include in the Series yet another book from his pen, the Catalogue, which he has left almost complete, of his fine collection of Arabic, Persian, and Turkish manuscripts

R A N

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BOOK I

In the Name of God the Compassionate, the Merciful

This is the Book of the *Mathnawí*, which is the roots of the roots of the roots of the (Mohammedan) Religion in respect of (its) unveiling the mysteries of attainment (to the Truth) and of certainty, and which is the greatest science of God and the clearest (religious) way of God and the most manifest evidence of God

The likeness of the light thereof is *as a niche in which is a candle* shining with a radiance brighter than the dawn It is the heart's Paradise, having fountains and boughs, one of them a fountain called Salsabíl amongst the travellers on this Path, and in the view of the possessors of (mystical) stations and (Divine) graces, it (the *Mathnawí*) is *best as a station and most excellent as a (spiritual) resting-place* Therein the righteous eat and drink, and thereby the (spiritually) free are gladdened and rejoiced, and like the Nile of Egypt it is a (pleasant) drink to them that endure patiently, but a grief to the people of Pharaoh and the unbelievers, even as God hath said, *He lets many be misled thereby and He lets many be guided thereby* It is the cure for (sick) breasts, and the purge of sorrows, and the expounder of the Qur'an, and the (source of) abundance of (Divine) gifts, and the (means of) cleansing (sordid) dispositions, (written) *by the hands of noble righteous scribes* who forbid (with the words) *None shall touch it except the purified Falsehood doth not approach it either from before or behind*, since God observes it and watches over it, *and He is the best guardian and He is the most merciful of them that show mercy* And it hath other titles of honour which God hath bestowed upon it

We have confined ourselves to this little (that has been mentioned), for the little is an index to the much, and a mouthful (of water) is an index to the (quality of the) pool, and a handful (of wheat) is an index to (serves as a sample of the contents of) a great threshing-floor (granary)

Saith the feeble slave who hath need of the mercy of God most High, Muhammad son of Muhammad son of al-Husayn of (the city of) Balkh—may God accept (this offering) from him "I have exerted myself to give length to the Poem in Rhymed Couplets, which comprises strange tales and rare sayings and excellent discourses and precious indications, and the (religious) path of the ascetics and the (spiritual) garden of the devotees—(all this being) brief in expression[1] but manifold in meaning—at the request of my master and stay and support, (who holds) the place of the spirit in my body, and (who is) the treasure of

[1] Literally, "short in respect of the constructions (of its phraseology)"

my to-day and my to-morrow, namely, the Shaykh, the exemplar for them that know God and the leader of them that possess right guidance and certainty, the helper of humankind, the trusted keeper of (their) hearts and consciences, the charge deposited by God amongst His creatures, and His choice amongst His creation, and (the object of) His injunctions to His Prophet and (of) His secrets (imparted) to His chosen one, the key of the treasuries of the empyrean, the trustee of the riches stored in the earth, the father of virtues, the Sword (Husám) of the Truth and Religion, Hasan son of Muhammad son of al-Hasan, generally known as Ibn Akhí Turk, the Abú Yazíd of the time, the Junayd of the age, the entirely veracious son of an entirely veracious sire and grandsire[1]—may God be well-pleased with him and with them!—a native of Urmiya, tracing his descent to the Shaykh who is honoured for having said, 'In the evening I was a Kurd, and in the morning I was an Arab.' May God sanctify his soul and the souls of his successors! How goodly is the ancestor and how goodly the successor!

His is a lineage upon which the sun hath cast its mantle, and a renown of ancestry before which the stars have dimmed their beams. Their (his family's) courtyard hath ever been Fortune's cynosure (*qibla*), whither turn the sons of the (spiritual) rulers, and Hope's Ka'ba which is circumambulated by deputations of the suitors for bounty, and may it never cease to be thus, so long as a star rises and an orient sun appears above the horizon, to the end that it may be a fastness for the godly, spiritual, heavenly, super-celestial, illuminated ones who possess (mystical) insight, the silent ones who behold, the absent ones who are present, the kings beneath threadbare garments, the nobles of the nations, the owners of excellences, the luminaries who display the (Divine) evidences. Amen, O Lord of all created beings! And this is a prayer that will not be rejected, for it is a prayer that includes (in its benefits) all classes of the creation. Glory be to God, the Lord of all created beings, and God bless the best of His creatures, Mohammed, and his kin, the noble, the pure!"

[1] Literally, "a *siddíq*, the son of a *siddíq* (who was) the son of the *siddíq*."

IN THE NAME OF GOD THE MERCIFUL, THE COMPASSIONATE.

Listen to the reed how it tells a tale, complaining of separations—

Saying, "Ever since I was parted from the reed-bed, my lament hath caused man and woman to moan

I want a bosom torn by severance, that I may unfold (to such a one) the pain of love-desire

Every one who is left far from his source wishes back the time when he was united with it

In every company I uttered my wailful notes, I consorted with the unhappy and with them that rejoice

Every one became my friend from his own opinion, none sought out my secrets from within me

My secret is not far from my plaint, but ear and eye lack the light (whereby it should be apprehended)

Body is not veiled from soul, nor soul from body, yet none is permitted to see the soul

This noise of the reed is fire, it is not wind whoso hath not this fire, may he be naught!

'Tis the fire of Love that is in the reed, 'tis the fervour of Love that is in the wine

The reed is the comrade of every one who has been parted from a friend its strains pierced our hearts[1]

Who ever saw a poison and antidote like the reed? Who ever saw a sympathiser and a longing lover like the reed?

The reed tells of the Way full of blood and recounts stories of the passion of Majnun

Only to the senseless is this sense confided the tongue hath no customer save the ear

In our woe the days (of life) have become untimely our days travel hand in hand with burning griefs

If our days are gone, let them go!—'tis no matter Do Thou remain, for none is holy as Thou art!

Whoever is not a fish becomes sated with His water, whoever is without daily bread finds the day long

None that is raw understands the state of the ripe therefore my words must be brief Farewell!

O son, burst thy chains and be free! How long wilt thou be a bondsman to[2] silver and gold?

If thou pour the sea into a pitcher, how much will it hold? One day's store

The pitcher, the eye of the covetous, never becomes full the oyster-shell is not filled with pearls until it is contented

[1] Literally, "rent our veils"

[2] Literally, "(in) the bonds of"

He (alone) whose garment is rent by a (mighty) love is purged of covetousness and all defect

Hail, O Love that bringest us good gain—thou that art the physician of all our ills,

The remedy of our pride and vainglory, our Plato and our Galen!

25 Through Love the earthly body soared to the skies the mountain began to dance and became nimble

Love inspired Mount Sinai, O lover, (so that) Sinai (was made) drunken *and Moses fell in a swoon*

Were I joined to the lip of one in accord with me, I too, like the reed, would tell all that may be told,

(But) whoever is parted from one who speaks his language becomes dumb, though he have a hundred songs

When the rose is gone and the garden faded, thou wilt hear no more the nightingale's story

30 The Beloved is all and the lover (but) a veil, the Beloved is living and the lover a dead thing

When Love hath no care for him, he is left as a bird without wings Alas for him then!

How should I have consciousness (of aught) before or behind when the light of my Beloved is not before me and behind?

Love wills that this Word should be shown forth if the mirror does not reflect, how is that?

Dost thou know why the mirror (of thy soul) reflects nothing? Because the rust is not cleared from its face

35 O my friends, hearken to this tale in truth it is the very marrow of our inward state

The story of the king's falling in love with a handmaiden and buying her

In olden time there was a king to whom belonged the power temporal and also the power spiritual

It chanced that one day he rode with his courtiers to the chase

On the king's highway the king espied a handmaiden the soul of the king was enthralled by her

Forasmuch as the bird, his soul, was fluttering in its cage, he gave money and bought the handmaiden

40 After he had bought her and won to his desire, by Divine destiny she sickened

A certain man had an ass but no pack-saddle (as soon as) he got a saddle, the wolf carried away his ass

He had a pitcher, but no water could be obtained when he found water, the pitcher broke

The king gathered the physicians together from left and right and said to them, "The life of us both is in your hands

My life is of no account, (but) she is the life of my life I am in pain and wounded she is my remedy

Whoever heals her that is my life will bear away with him my treasure and pearls, large and small[1] "

They all answered him, saying, "We will hazard our lives[2] and summon all our intelligence and put it into the common stock

Each one of us is the Messiah of a world (of people) in our hands is a medicine for every pain "

In their arrogance they did not say, "If God will", therefore God showed unto them the weakness of Man

I mean (a case in which) omission of the saving clause is (due to) a hardness of heart, not the mere saying of these words, for that is a superficial circumstance

How many a one has not pronounced the saving clause, and yet his soul is in harmony with the soul of it!

The more cures and remedies they applied, the more did the illness increase, and the need was not fulfilled

The sick girl[3] became (thin) as a hair, (while) the eyes of the king flowed with tears of blood, like a river

By Divine destiny, oxymel produced bile, and oil of almonds was increasing the dryness

From (giving) myrobalan constipation resulted, relaxation ceased, and water fed the flames, like naphtha

How it became manifest to the king that the physicians were unable to cure the handmaiden, and how he turned his face towards God and dreamed of a holy man

When the king saw the powerlessness of those physicians, he ran bare-footed to the mosque

He entered the mosque and advanced to the *mihrab* (to pray) the prayer-carpet was bathed in the king's tears

On coming to himself out of the flood of ecstasy (*fana*) he opened his lips in goodly praise and laud,

Saying, "O Thou whose least gift is the empire of the world, what shall I say, inasmuch as Thou knowest the hidden thing?

O Thou with whom we always take refuge in our need, once again we have missed the way

But Thou hast said, 'Albeit I know thy secret, nevertheless declare it forthwith in thine outward act'"

When from the depths of his soul he raised a cry (of supplication), the sea of Bounty began to surge

Slumber overtook him in the midst of weeping he dreamed that an old man appeared

And said, "Good tidings, O king! Thy prayers are granted If to-morrow a stranger come for thee, he is from me

[1] Or, "my pearls and coral "
[2] *I e* 'we will exert ourselves to the utmost "
[3] Literally, "that slave-girl from sickness "

When he comes, he is the skilled physician deem him veracious, for he is trusty and true

In his remedy behold absolute magic, in his temperament behold the might of God!"

When the promised hour arrived and day broke and the sun, (rising) from the east, began to burn the stars,

The king was in the belvedere, expecting to see that which had been shown mysteriously

He saw a person excellent and worshipful, a sun amidst a shadow,

Coming from afar, like the new moon (in slenderness and radiance) he was non-existent, though existent in the form of phantasy

In the spirit phantasy is as naught, (yet) behold a world (turning) on a phantasy!

Their peace and their war (turn) on a phantasy, and their pride and their shame spring from a phantasy,

(But) those phantasies which ensnare the saints are the reflexion of the fair ones[1] of the garden of God

In the countenance of the stranger-guest was appearing that phantasy which the king beheld in his dream

The king himself, instead of the chamberlains, went forward to meet his guest from the Invisible

Both were seamen who had learned to swim, the souls of both were knit together without sewing

The king said, "Thou wert my Beloved (in reality), not she, but in this world deed issues from deed

O thou who art to me (as) Muṣṭafá (Mohammed), while I am like unto 'Umar—I will gird my loins to do thee service"

Beseeching the Lord, who is our Helper, to help us to observe self-control in all circumstances, and explaining the harmful and pernicious consequences of indiscipline

Let us implore God to help us to self-control one who lacks self-control is deprived of the grace of the Lord

The undisciplined man does not maltreat himself alone, but he sets the whole world on fire

A table (of food) was coming down from heaven without headache (trouble) and without selling and buying,

(When) some of[2] the people of Moses cried disrespectfully, "Where is garlic and lentils?"

(Straightway) the heavenly bread and dishes (of food) were cut off there remained (for all of them) the toil of sowing and (labouring with) mattock and scythe

Again, when Jesus made intercession, God sent food and bounty (from heaven) on trays,

[1] Literally the moon faced ones [2] Literally "amidst

But once more the insolent fellows omitted to show respect and, like beggars, snatched away the viands,

(Although) Jesus entreated them, saying, "This is lasting and will not fail from off the earth"

To show suspicion and greed at the table of Majesty is ingratitude

Because of those impudent wretches[1] who were blinded by greed, that gate of mercy was closed upon them

On account of withholding the poor-tax no rain-clouds arise, and in consequence of fornication the plague spreads in all directions

Whatever befalls thee of gloom and sorrow is the result of irreverence and insolence withal

Any one behaving with irreverence in the path of the Friend is a brigand who robs men, and he is no man

Through discipline this Heaven has been filled with light, and through discipline the angels became immaculate and holy

By reason of irreverence the sun was eclipsed, and insolence caused an 'Azázíl[2] to be turned back from the door

The meeting of the king with the divine physician whose coming had been announced to him in a dream

He (the king) opened his hands and clasped him to his breast and received him, like love, into his heart and soul,

And began to kiss his hand and brow and inquire concerning his home and journey

(So) with many a question he led him to the dais "At last," said he, "I have found a treasure by being patient"

He said (also), "O gift from God and defence against trouble, (O thou who art) the meaning of 'Patience is the key of joy'!

O thou whose countenance is the answer to every question, by thee hard knots are loosed without discussion

Thou interpretest all that is in our hearts, thou givest a helping hand to every one whose foot is in the mire

Welcome, O chosen one, O approved one! If thou vanish, Destiny will come (upon us) and the wide room will be straitened

Thou art the protector of the people He that desires (thee) not hath gone to perdition *Nay, verily, if he do not refrain* !"

How the king led the physician to the bedside of the sick girl, that he might see her condition

When that meeting and bounteous (spiritual) repast was over, he took his hand and conducted him to the harem

He rehearsed the tale of the invalid and her illness, and then seated him beside the sick (girl)

[1] Literally, "beggar-faced ones" [2] The name borne by Iblís before his fall

The physician observed the colour of her face, (felt) her pulse, and (inspected) her urine, he heard both the symptoms and the (secondary) causes of her malady

He said, "None of the remedies which they have applied builds up (health) they (the false physicians) have wrought destruction

They were ignorant of the inward state I seek refuge with God from that which they invent"

He saw the pain, and the secret became open to him, but he concealed it and did not tell the king

Her pain was not from black or yellow bile the smell of every firewood appears from the smoke

From her sore grief he perceived that she was heart-sore, well in body, but stricken in heart

Being in love is made manifest by soreness of heart there is no sickness like heart-sickness

The lover's ailment is separate from all other ailments love is the astrolabe of the mysteries of God

Whether love be from this (earthly) side or from that (heavenly) side, in the end it leads us yonder

Whatsoever I say in exposition and explanation of Love, when I come to Love (itself) I am ashamed of that (explanation)

Although the commentary of the tongue makes (all) clear, yet tongueless love is clearer

Whilst the pen was making haste in writing, it split upon itself as soon as it came to Love

In expounding it (Love), the intellect lay down (helplessly) like an ass in the mire it was Love (alone) that uttered the explanation of love and loverhood

The proof of the sun is the sun (himself) if thou require the proof, do not avert thy face from him!

If the shadow gives an indication of him, the sun (himself) gives spiritual light every moment

The shadow, like chat in the night-hours, brings sleep to thee, when the sun rises *the moon is cloven asunder*

There is nothing in the world so wondrous strange as the sun, (but) the Sun of the spirit is everlasting it hath no yesterday

Although the external sun is unique, still it is possible to imagine one resembling it,

The spiritual Sun which is beyond the aether hath no peer in the mind or externally

Where is room in the imagination for His essence, that the like of Him should come into the imagination?

When news arrived of the face of Shamsu'ddin (the Sun of the Religion), the sun of the fourth heaven drew in its head (hid itself for shame)

Since his name has come (to my lips), it behoves me to set forth some hint of his bounty

At this moment my Soul[1] has plucked my skirt he has caught the perfume of Joseph's vest

(He said) "For the sake of our years of companionship, recount one of those sweet ecstasies,

That earth and heaven may laugh (with joy), that intellect and spirit and eye may increase a hundredfold"

(I said) "Do not lay tasks on me, for I have passed away from myself (*fana*), my apprehensions are blunted and I know not how to praise

Everything that is said by one who has not returned to consciousness, if he constrains himself or boastfully exaggerates, is unseemly

How should I—not a vein of mine is sensible—describe that Friend who hath no peer?

The description of this severance and this heart's blood do thou at present leave over till another time"

He said "Feed me, for I am hungry, and make haste, for Time is a cutting sword

The Súfí is the son of the (present) time, O comrade it is not the rule of the Way to say 'To-morrow'

Art not thou indeed a Súfí, then? That which is (in hand) is reduced to naught by postponing the payment"

I said to him "It is better that the secret of the Friend should be disguised do thou hearken (to it as implied) in the contents of the tale

It is better that the lovers' secret should be told in the talk of others"

He said "Tell it forth openly and nakedly and without unfaithfulness do not put me off, O trifler!

Lift the veil and speak nakedly, for I do not wear a shirt when I sleep with the Adored One"

I said "If He should become naked in (thy) vision, neither wilt thou remain nor thy bosom nor thy waist

Ask thy wish, but ask with measure a blade of straw will not support the mountain

If the Sun, by whom this world is illumined, should approach a little (nearer), all will be burned

Do not seek trouble and turmoil and bloodshed say no more concerning the Sun of Tabriz!"

This (mystery) hath no end tell of the beginning Go, relate the conclusion of this tale

[1] Husámu'ddín

How that saint demanded of the king to be alone with the handmaiden for the purpose of discovering her malady

He said "O king, make the house empty, send away both kinsfolk and strangers

Let no one listen in the entrance-halls, that I may ask certain things of this handmaiden "

The house was left empty, and not one inhabitant (remained) nobody save the physician and that sick girl

Very gently he said (to her), "Where is thy native town? for the treatment suitable to the people of each town is separate

And in that town who is related to thee? With what hast thou kinship and affinity?"

He laid his hand on her pulse and put questions, one by one, about the injustice of Heaven

When a thorn darts into any one's foot, he sets his foot upon his knee,

And keeps searching for its head with the point of a needle, and if he does not find it, he keeps moistening it (the place) with his lip

A thorn in the foot is so hard to find how (then) is it with a thorn in the heart? Answer (that)!

If every base fellow had seen the thorn in the heart, when would sorrows gain the upper hand over any one?

Somebody sticks a thorn under a donkey's tail the donkey does not know how to get rid of it he starts jumping

He jumps, and the thorn strikes more firmly (pierces deeper) it needs an intelligent person to extract a thorn

In order to get rid of the thorn, the donkey from irritation and pain went on kicking and dealing blows in a hundred places,

(But) that thorn-removing physician was an expert putting his hand on one spot after another, he tested (it)

He inquired of the girl concerning her friends, by way of narrative,

And she disclosed to the physician (many) circumstances touching her home and (former) masters and fellow-townsmen

He listened to her story (while) he continued to observe her pulse and its beating,

So that at whosoever's name her pulse should begin to throb, (he might know that) that person is the object of her soul's desire in the world

He counted up the friends in her native town, then he mentioned another town by name

He said "When you went forth from your own town, in which town did you live mostly?"

She mentioned the name of a certain town and from that too she passed on (to speak of another, and meanwhile) there was no change in the colour of her face or in her pulse

Masters and towns, one by one, she told of, and about dwelling-place and bread and salt

She told stories of many a town and many a house, (and still) no vein of her quivered nor did her cheek grow pale

Her pulse remained in its normal state, unimpaired, till he asked about Samarcand, the (city) sweet as candy

(Thereat) her pulse jumped and her face went red and pale (by turns), for she had been parted from a man of Samarcand, a goldsmith

When the physician found out this secret from the sick (girl), he discerned the source of that grief and woe

He said "Which is his quarter in passing (through the town)?" "*Sar-i Pul* (Bridge-head)," she replied, "and Ghatafar street"

Said he "I know what your illness is and I will at once display the arts of magic in delivering you[1]

Be glad and care-free and have no fear, for I will do to you that which rain does to the meadow

I will be anxious for you, be not you anxious I am kinder to you than a hundred fathers

Beware! tell not this secret to any one, not though the king should make much inquiry from you

When your heart becomes the grave of your secret, that desire of yours will be gained more quickly"

The Prophet said that any one who hides his inmost thought will soon attain to the object of his desire[2]

When seeds are hidden in the earth, their inward secret becomes the verdure of the garden

If gold and silver were not hidden, how would they get nourishment (grow and ripen) in the mine?

The promises and soothing words of the physician made the sick (girl) safe (free) from fear

There are true promises, grateful to the heart, there are false promises, fraught with disquietude

The promise of the noble is current (sterling) coin, the promise of the unworthy becomes anguish of soul

How the saint, having discovered the (cause of) the illness, laid it before the king

Then he arose and went to see the king and acquainted him with a portion of that matter

"The (best) plan," said he, "is that we should bring the man here for the sake of (curing) this malady

Summon the goldsmith from that far country, beguile him with gold and robes of honour"

[1] *I.e* "I will perform miracles on your behalf"

[2] Literally, "will soon be wedded to the object of his desire"

How the king sent messengers to Samarcand to fetch the goldsmith

185 The king sent thither one or two messengers, clever men and competent and very just

To Samarcand came the two messengers for the goldsmith debonair and wanton[1],

Saying, "O fine master, perfect in knowledge, thou whose quality (of perfection in thy craft) is famous in (all) the lands,

Lo, such-and-such a king hath chosen thee for (thy skill in) the goldsmith's craft, because thou art eminent

Look now, receive this robe of honour and gold and silver, when thou comest (to the king), thou wilt be a favourite and boon-companion "

190 The man saw the much wealth and the many robes he was beguiled, he parted from his town and children

Blithely the man came into the road, unaware that the king had formed a design against his life

He mounted an Arab horse and sped on joyously (what really was) the price of his blood he deemed a robe of honour

O (fool), who with a hundred consents thyself with thine own foot didst enter on the journey to the fated ill!

In his fancy (were dreams of) riches, power, and lordship Said 'Azrá'íl (the Angel of Death), "Go (thy way) Yes, thou wilt get (them)!"

195 When the stranger arrived (and turned) from the road, the physician brought him into the presence of the king

Proudly and delicately they conducted him to the king of kings, that he might burn (like a moth) on that candle of Tiraz

The king beheld him, showed great regard (for him), and entrusted to him the treasure-house (full) of gold

Then the physician said to him "O mighty Sultan, give the handmaiden to this lord,

In order that the handmaiden may be happy in union with him, and that the water of union with him may put out the fire (of passion) "

200 The king bestowed on him that moon-faced one and wedded those twain (who were) craving (each other's) company

During the space of six months they were satisfying their desire, till the girl was wholly restored to health

Thereafter he prepared for him a potion, so that when he drank it he began to dwindle away before her

When because of sickness his beauty remained not, the soul of the girl remained not in his pestilence (deadly toils)

[1] Literally, 'one who exceeds the due measure' or 'one who busies himself with vain things'

Since he became ugly and ill-favoured and sallow-cheeked, little by little he became cold (irksome and unpleasing) in her heart.

Those loves which are for the sake of a colour (outward beauty) are not love: in the end they are a disgrace.

Would that he too had been disgrace (deformity) altogether, so that that evil judgement might not have come to pass upon him!

Blood ran from his eye (that flowed with tears) like a river; his (handsome) face became the enemy of his life.

The peacock's plumage is its enemy: O many the king who hath been slain by his magnificence!

He said, "I am the muskdeer on account of whose gland that hunter shed my pure (innocent) blood.

Oh, I am the fox of the field whose head they (the hunters springing forth) from the covert cut off for the sake of the fur.

Oh, I am the elephant whose blood was shed by the blow of the mahout for the sake of the bone (ivory).

He who hath slain me for that which is other than I[1], does not he know that my blood sleepeth not (will not rest unavenged)?

To-day it lies on me and to-morrow it lies on him: when does the blood of one such as I am go to waste like this?

Although the wall casts a long shadow, (yet at last) the shadow turns back again towards it.

This world is the mountain, and our action the shout: the echo of the shouts comes (back) to us."

He said this and at the (same) moment went under the earth (gave up the ghost). The handmaiden was purged of pain and love,

Because love of the dead is not enduring, because the dead one is never coming (back) to us;

(But) love of the living is every moment fresher than a bud in the spirit and in the sight.

Choose the love of that Living One who is everlasting, who gives thee to drink of the wine that increases life.

Choose the love of Him from whose love all the prophets gained power and glory.

Do not say, "We have no admission to that King." Dealings with the generous are not difficult.

[1] I.e. "on account of my beauty, which is not my real self."

Setting forth how the slaying and poisoning of the goldsmith was (prompted) by Divine suggestion, not by sensual desire and wicked meditation

The slaying of this man by the hand of the physician was not (done) on account of hope or fear

He did not slay him to humour the king, (he did not slay him) until the Divine command and inspiration came

As for the boy whose throat was cut by Khadir, the vulgar do not comprehend the mystery thereof

He that receives from God inspiration and answer (to his prayer), whatsoever he may command is the essence of right

If one who bestows (spiritual) life should slay, it is allowable he is the (Divine) vicegerent, and his hand is the hand of God

Like Ismá'íl (Ishmael), lay your head before him, gladly and laughingly give up your soul before his dagger,

In order that your soul may remain laughing unto eternity, like the pure soul of Ahmad (Mohammed) with the One (God)

Lovers drain the cup of joy at the moment when the fair ones slay them with their own hand

The king did not commit that bloodshed because of lust cease from thinking evil and disputing

You thought that he committed a foul crime, (but) in (the state of) purity how should the sublimation leave (any) alloy (behind)?

The purpose of this (severe) discipline and this rough treatment is that the furnace may extract the dross from the silver

The testing of good and bad is in order that the gold may boil and bring the scum to the top

If his act were not the inspiration of God, he would have been a dog that rends (its prey), not a king

He was unstained by lust and covetousness and passion (what) he did (was) good, but good that wore the aspect of evil

If Khadir stove the boat in the sea, (yet) in Khadir's staving there are a hundred rightnesses

The imagination of Moses, notwithstanding his (spiritual) illumination and excellence, was screened from (the comprehension of) that (act of Khadir) Do not thou fly without wings!

That (deed of the king) is a red rose (worthy of praise), do not call it blood (murder) He is intoxicated with Reason, do not call him a madman

Had it been his desire to shed the blood of a Moslem, I am an infidel if I would have mentioned his name (with praise)

The highest heaven trembles at praise of the wicked, and by praise of him the devout man is moved to think evil

He was a king and a very heedful king, he was elect and the elect (favourite) of God

One who is slain by a king like this, he (the king) leads him to fortune and to the best (most honourable) estate

Unless he (the king) had seen advantage to him (the goldsmith) in doing violence to him, how should that absolute Mercy have sought to do violence?

The child trembles at the barber's scalpel (but) the fond mother is happy in that pain (of her child)

He takes half a life and gives a hundred lives (in exchange) he gives that which enters not into your imagination

You are judging (his actions) from (the analogy of) yourself, but you have fallen far, far (away from the truth) Consider well!

The story of the greengrocer and the parrot and the parrot's spilling the oil in the shop

There was a greengrocer who had a parrot, a sweet-voiced green talking parrot

(Perched) on the bench, it would watch over the shop (in the owner's absence) and talk finely to all the traders

In addressing human beings it would speak (like them), it was (also) skilled in the song of parrots

(Once) it sprang from the bench and flew away, it spilled the bottles of rose-oil

Its master came from the direction of his house and seated himself on the bench at his ease as a merchant does

(Then) he saw the bench was full of oil and his clothes greasy, he smote the parrot on the head it was made bald by the blow

For some few days it refrained from speech, the greengrocer, in repentance, heaved deep sighs,

Tearing his beard and saying, "Alas! the sun of my prosperity has gone under the clouds

Would that my hand had been broken (powerless) at that moment! How (ever) did I strike (such a blow) on the head of that sweet-tongued one?"

He was giving presents to every dervish, that he might get back the speech of his bird

After three days and three nights, he was seated on the bench, distraught and sorrowful, like a man in despair,

Showing the bird every sort of marvel (in the hope) that maybe it would begin to speak

Meanwhile a bare-headed dervish, clad in a *jawlaq* (coarse woollen frock), passed by, with a head hairless as the outside of bowl and basin

Thereupon the parrot began to talk, screeched at the dervish and said, "Hey, fellow!

How were you mixed up with the bald, O baldpate? Did you, then, spill oil from the bottle?"

The bystanders laughed at the parrot's inference, because it deemed the wearer of the frock to be like itself

Do not measure the actions of holy men by (the analogy of) yourself, though *sher* (lion) and *shír* (milk) are similar in writing

On this account the whole world is gone astray scarcely any one is cognisant of God's *Abdál* (Substitutes)[1]

265 They set up (a claim of) equality with the prophets, they supposed the saints to be like themselves

"Behold," they said, "we are men, they are men, both we and they are in bondage to sleep and food"

In (their) blindness they did not perceive that there is an infinite difference between (them)

Both species of *zanbur* ate and drank from the (same) place, but from that one (the hornet) came a sting, and from this other (the bee) honey

Both species of deer ate grass and drank water from this one came dung, and from that one pure musk

270 Both reeds drank from the same water-source, (but) this one is empty and that one (full of) sugar

Consider hundreds of thousands of such likenesses and observe that the distance between the two is (as great as) a seventy years' journey

This one eats, and filth is discharged from him, that one eats, and becomes entirely the light of God

This one eats, (and of him) is born nothing but avarice and envy, that one eats, (and of him) is born nothing but love of the One (God)

This one is good (fertile) soil and that one brackish and bad, this one is a fair angel and that one a devil and wild beast

275 If both resemble each other in aspect, it may well be (so) bitter water and sweet water have (the same) clearness

Who knows (the difference) except a man possessed of (spiritual) taste? Find (him) he knows the sweet water from the brine

Comparing magic with (prophetic) miracle, he (the ignorant one) fancies that both are founded on deceit

The magicians (in the time) of Moses, for contention's sake, lifted up (in their hands) a rod like his,

(But) between this rod and that rod there is a vast difference, from this action (magic) to that action (miracle) is a great way

280 This action is followed by the curse of God, (while) that action receives in payment the mercy (blessing) of God

The infidels in contending (for equality with the prophets and saints) have the nature of an ape the (evil) nature is a canker within the breast

[1] The saints next in rank to the *Qutb* who is the head of the spiritual hierarchy

Whatever a man does, the ape at every moment does the same thing that he sees done by the man

He thinks, "I have acted like him" how should that quarrelsome-looking one know the difference?

This one (the holy man) acts by the command (of God), and he (the apish imitator) for the sake of quarrelling (rivalry) Pour dust on the heads of those who have quarrelsome faces!

That (religious) hypocrite joins in ritual prayer with the (sincere) conformist (only) for quarrelling's sake, not for supplication

In prayer and fasting and pilgrimage and alms-giving the true believers are (engaged) with the hypocrite in (what brings) victory and defeat

Victory in the end is to the true believers, upon the hypocrite (falls) defeat in the state hereafter

Although both are intent on one game, in relation to each other they are (as far apart as) the man of Merv and the man of Rayy

Each one goes to his (proper) abiding-place, each one fares according to his name

If he be called a true believer, his soul rejoices, and if you say "hypocrite," he becomes filled with fire (rage)

His (the true believer's) name is loved on account of its essence (which is true faith), this one's (the hypocrite's) name is loathed on account of its pestilent qualities

(The four letters) *mim* and *waw* and *mim* and *nun* do not confer honour the word *mumin* (true believer) is only for the sake of denotation

If you call him (the true believer) hypocrite, this vile name is stinging (him) within like a scorpion

If this name is not derived from Hell, then why is there the taste of Hell in it?

The foulness of that ill name is not from the letters, the bitterness of that sea-water is not from the vessel (containing it)

The letters are the vessel therein the meaning is (contained) like water, (but) the sea of the meaning is (with God)—*with Him is the Ummu 'l-Kitáb*

In this world the bitter sea and the sweet sea (are divided)—between them is *a barrier which they do not seek to cross*

Know that both these flow from one origin Pass on from them both, go (all the way) to their origin!

Without the touchstone you will never know in the assay adulterated gold and fine gold by (using your own) judgement

Any one in whose soul God shall put the touchstone, he will distinguish certainty from doubt

A piece of rubbish jumps into the mouth of a living man, and only when he ejects it is he at ease

When, amongst thousands of morsels (of food), one little piece of rubbish entered (his mouth), the living man's sense (of touch or taste) tracked it down

The worldly sense is the ladder to this world, the religious sense is the ladder to Heaven

Seek ye the well-being of the former sense from the physician, beg ye the well-being of the latter sense from the Beloved

305 The health of the former arises from the flourishing state of the body, the health of the latter arises from the ruin of the body

The spiritual way ruins the body and, after having ruined it, restores it to prosperity

Ruined the house for the sake of the golden treasure, and with that same treasure builds it better (than before),

Cut off the water and cleansed the river-bed, then caused drinking-water to flow in the river-bed,

Cleft the skin and drew out the iron point (of the arrow or spear)—then fresh skin grew over it (the wound),

310 Rased the fortress and took it from the infidel, then reared thereon a hundred towers and ramparts

Who shall describe the action of Him who hath no like? This that I have said (is only what the present) necessity is affording

Sometimes it (the action of God) appears like this and sometimes the contrary of this the work of religion is naught but bewilderment

(I mean) not one bewildered in such wise that his back is (turned) towards Him, nay, but one bewildered (with ecstasy) like this and drowned (in God) and intoxicated with the Beloved

The face of the one is set towards the Beloved, (while) the face of the other is just his own face (he is facing himself)

315 Look long on the face of every one, keep watch attentively it may be that by doing service (to Sufis) you will come to know the face (of the true saint)

Since there is many a devil who hath the face of Adam, it is not well to give your hand to every hand,

Because the fowler produces a whistling sound in order to decoy the bird[1],

(So that) the bird may hear the note of its congener and come down from the air and find trap and knife-point

The vile man will steal the language of dervishes, that he may thereby chant a spell over (fascinate and deceive) one who is simple

320 The work of (holy) men is (as) light and heat, the work of vile men is trickery and shamelessness

[1] Literally, "in order that the birdcatcher may decoy"

They make a woollen lion for the purpose of begging, they give the title of Ahmad (Mohammed) to Bú Musaylim,

(But) to Bu Musaylim remained the title of *Kadhdhdb* (Liar), to Mohammed remained (the title of) *Ulu 'l-albáb* (Endowed with understanding)

The wine of God, its seal (last result) is pure musk, (but) as for (the other) wine, its seal is stench and torment

Story of the Jewish king who for bigotry's sake used to slay the Christians

Amongst the Jews there was a king who wrought oppression, an enemy of Jesus and a destroyer of Christians

'Twas the epoch of Jesus and the turn was his[1] he was the soul of Moses, and Moses the soul of him,

(But) the squint-eyed (double-seeing) king separated in the way of God those two Divine (prophets) who were (really) in accord (with each other)

The master said to a squint-eyed (pupil), "Come on, go, fetch that bottle out of the room"

Said the squint-eyed one "Which of the two bottles shall I bring to you? Explain fully"

"There are not two bottles," replied the master, "go, leave off squinting and do not be seeing more (than one)"

"O master," said he, "don't chide me" Said the master, "Smash one of those two"

The bottle was one, though in his eyes it seemed two, when he broke the bottle, there was no other

When one was broken, both vanished from sight a man is made squint-eyed by (evil) propensity and anger

Anger and lust make a man squint-eyed, they change the spirit (so that it departs) from rectitude

When self-interest appears, virtue becomes hidden a hundred veils rise from the heart to the eye

When the cadi lets bribery gain hold of his heart, how should he know the wronger from the wretched victim of wrong?

The king, from Jewish rancour, became so squint-eyed that (we cry), "Mercy, O Lord, mercy (save us from such an affliction)!"

He slew hundreds of thousands of wronged (innocent) believers, saying, "I am the protection and support of the religion of Moses"

How the vizier instructed the king to plot

He had a vizier, a miscreant and ogler (deceiver), who by reason of (his exceeding) guile would tie knots on water

"The Christians," said he, "seek to save their lives, they hide their religion from the king

[1] *I.e* it was his turn to appear as a prophet

340 Slay them not, for slaying (them) is useless: religion hath no smell, it is not musk and aloes-wood.

The secret is concealed in a hundred coverings: its outward form is (in agreement) with thee, resembling thee, (but) the inward (reality) is (in) disagreement."

The king said to him: "Tell (me), then, what is the (best) plan? What is the remedy against that deceit and imposture?—

So that there may not remain a single Christian in the world, neither one whose religion is manifest nor one who is concealed."

"O king," said he, "cut off my ears and hands, rip my nose by bitter (cruel) decree,

345 Then bring me under the gallows, that an intercessor may plead for me.

Do this deed in the place for (public) proclamation, on a highway where roads run in four directions.

Then banish me from thy presence to a distant land, that I may cast mischief and confusion amongst them.

How the vizier brought the Christians into doubt and perplexity

Then I will say (to them), 'I am secretly a Christian. O God who knowest (all) things hidden, Thou knowest me.

The king was informed of my (Christian) faith and from bigotry sought to take my life.

350 I wished to hide my religion from the king and profess his religion,

(But) the king got a scent of my inmost beliefs, and my words were suspected (when I stood) before the king.

He said, "Your words are like a needle in bread (specious but pernicious); there is a window between my heart and yours:

Through that window I have seen your (real) state. I see your state and will not heed your words."

Had not the spirit of Jesus been my aid, he would in Jewish fashion have torn me to pieces.

355 For Jesus' sake I would yield my life and give my head and lay on myself (confess) myriads of obligations to him.

I do not grudge Jesus my life, but full well am I versed in the knowledge of his religion.[1]

Grief was coming over me (it seemed to me a pity) that that holy religion should perish amongst those who are ignorant (of it).

Thanks be to God and to Jesus that I have become a guide to the true faith.

[1] In this way he excuses himself for not having died a martyr's death.

I have escaped from Jews and Judaism so (entirely) that I have bound my waist with a (Christian) girdle

The (present) epoch is the epoch of Jesus O men, hearken with your souls unto the mysteries of his religion!'"

The king did to him that deed (mutilation) which he had proposed the people remained in amazement at his deed

He (the king) drove him away to the Christians After that, he (the vizier) began to proselytise

How the Christians let themselves be duped by the vizier

Myriads of Christian men gathered round him, little by little, in his abode,

(While) he secretly expounded to them the mysteries of Gospel and girdle and prayer

Outwardly he was a preacher of (religious) ordinances, but inwardly he was (as) the whistle and snare (of the fowler)

On this account[1] some Companions (of Mohammed) begged of the Prophet (that he would acquaint them with) the deceitfulness of the ghoul-like soul[2],

Saying, "What of hidden selfish interests does it mingle in acts of worship and in pure spiritual devotion?"

They were not seeking from him excellence of piety, they were not inquiring where lay the outward defect

Hair by hair, speck by speck, they were recognising the deceitfulness of the fleshly soul as (plainly as the difference of) the rose from parsley

Even the hair-splitters (the most scrupulous) of the Companions used to become distraught in spirit at the (Prophet's) admonition to them (the inquirers)

How the Christians followed the vizier

The Christians all gave their hearts to him what (how great), indeed, is the strength of the (blind) conformity of the vulgar!

They planted love of him within their breasts, they were regarding him as the vicar of Jesus

He inwardly (in reality) was the accursed one-eyed Antichrist O God, do Thou (hear and) answer the cry (of those in trouble) —what a good helper art Thou!

O God, there are myriads of snares and baits, and we are as greedy foodless birds

From moment to moment we are caught in a fresh snare, though we become, each one, (like) a falcon or a Símurgh

Every moment Thou art delivering us, and again we are going to a snare, O Thou who art without want!

[1] Because it is hard to distinguish truth from falsehood

[2] The appetitive soul, "the flesh"

We are putting corn in this barn, (and then) we are losing the corn that has been garnered

(Why), after all, do not we consider with intelligent mind that this damage to the corn arises from the deceitfulness of the mouse?

Since the mouse has made a hole in our barn, and our barn has been ravaged by its guile,

O soul, in the first place avert the mischief of the mouse, and then show fervour (zeal) in garnering the corn

Hear (one) of the sayings related from the Chiefest of the Chief (the Prophet) "No prayer is complete without 'presence' (concentration of the mind on God)"

If there is no thievish mouse in our barn, where is the corn of forty years' works (of devotion)?

Why is the daily sincerity (of our devotions) not being stored, bit by bit, in this barn of ours?

Many a star (spark) of fire shot forth from the iron (of good works), and that burning heart received (it) and drew (it) in,

But in the darkness a hidden thief is laying his finger upon the stars,

Extinguishing the stars one by one, that no lamp may shine from the (spiritual) sky

Though there be thousands of snares at our feet, when Thou art with us there is not any trouble

Every night Thou freest the spirits from the body's snare, and dost erase (the impressions on) the tablets (of the mind)

The spirits are set free every night from this cage, (they are) done with ordinance and talk and tale

At night prisoners are unconscious of their prison, at night governors are unconscious of their power

There is no sorrow, no thought of gain or loss, no fancy of this person or that person

This is the state of the *'arif* (gnostic), even without sleep God said, (*Thou wouldst deem them awake*) *whilst they slept* Shy not at this[1]

He is asleep, day and night, to the affairs of the world, like a pen in the hand of the Lord's control

One who sees not the hand in the writing thinks (that) the act (of writing proceeds) from the pen by means of movement

He (God) hath shown forth some part of this state of the *'arif*, (inasmuch as) the vulgar too are carried off (overtaken) by sleep of the senses

Their souls are gone into the desert that is without description their spirits and bodies are at rest,

And with a whistle thou leadest them back to the snare, leadest them all (back) to justice and to the judge

[1] *I.e.* "do not deny this or disbelieve in it"

Like Isráfil (Seraphiel), He (God) who causes the dawn to break brings them all from those lands (of spirit) into (the world of) form

He embodies the spirits divested (of body), He makes each body pregnant (laden) again (with actions and works)

He makes the steed of the souls bare of saddle this is the 400
inner meaning of "Sleep is the brother of Death",

But in order that they may return in the daytime, He puts a long tether on its leg,

So that in the daytime He may lead it back from that meadow and bring it from the pasture (to go) under the load

Would that He had guarded this spirit as the Men of the Cave or as the Ark of Noah,

That this mind and eye and ear might be delivered from the Flood of wakefulness and consciousness!

Oh, in the world there is many a Man of the Cave beside 405
you, before you, at this time

The Cave is with him, the Friend is in converse with him, but your eyes and ears are sealed, (so) what does it avail?

Story of the Caliph's seeing Layla

The Caliph said to Laylá "Art thou she by whom Majnun was distracted and led astray?

Thou art not superior to other fair ones" "Be silent," she replied, "since thou art not Majnun"

Whosoever is awake (to the material world) is the more asleep (to the spiritual world), his wakefulness is worse than his sleep

When our soul is not awake to God, wakefulness is like clos- 410
ing our doors (to Divine influences)

All day long, from the buffets of phantasy and from (thoughts of) loss and gain and from fear of decline,

There remains to it (the soul) neither joy nor grace and glory nor way of journeying to Heaven

The one asleep (to spiritual things) is he who hath hope of every vain fancy and holds parley with it

Diabolum per somnum videt tanquam virginem caelestem, deinde propter libidinem effundit cum diabolo aquam (seminis)

Postquam semen generationis in terram salsuginosam infudit, 415
ipse ad se redit, fugit ab eo illa imago

Hinc percipit languorem capitis et (videt) corpus pollutum Proh dolor ob illud simulacrum visum (sed revera) non visum!

The bird is flying on high, and its shadow is speeding on the earth, flying like a bird

Some fool begins to chase the shadow, running (after it) so far that he becomes powerless (exhausted),

Not knowing that it is the reflexion of that bird in the air, not knowing where is the origin of the shadow

420 He shoots arrows at the shadow, his quiver is emptied in seeking (to shoot it)

The quiver of his life became empty his life passed in running hotly in chase of the shadow

(But) when the shadow of God is his nurse, it delivers him from (every) phantom and shadow

The shadow of God is that servant of God who is dead to this world and living through God

Lay hold of his skirt most quickly without misgiving, that you may be saved in the skirt (end) of the last days (of the world)

425 (The shadow mentioned in the words) *How He (God) extended the shadow* is the form of the saints, which guides to the light of the Divine Sun

Do not go in this valley without this guide, say, like Khalíl (Abraham), "*I love not them that set*"

Go, from the shadow gain a sun pluck the skirt of the (spiritual) king, Shams-i Tabrízí (the Sun of Tabriz)!

If you do not know the way to this feast and bridal, ask of Ẓiyá'u 'l-Haqq (the Radiance of God) Husámu'ddín

And if on the way envy seize you by the throat, it belongs to (is characteristic of) Iblís to go beyond bounds in envy,

430 For he because of envy hath disdain for Adam, and because of envy is at war with felicity

In the Way there is no harder pass than this Oh, fortunate he who is not companioned by envy!

This body, you must know, is the house of envy, for the household are tainted with envy

If the body is the house of envy, yet God made that body very pure

(The text) *Cleanse My house, ye twain*, is the explanation of (such) purity it (the purified heart) is a treasure of (Divine) light, though its talisman is of earth

435 When you practise deceit and envy against one who is without envy, from that envy black stains arise in your heart

Become (as) dust under the feet of the men of God, throw dust on the head of envy, even as we do

Explanation of the envy of the vizier

That petty vizier had his origin from envy, so that for vanity he gave to the wind (sacrificed) his ears and nose,

In the hope that by the sting of envy his venom might enter the souls of the poor (Christians)

Any one who from envy mutilates his nose makes himself without ear and without nose (unable to apprehend spiritual things)

The nose is that which catches a scent, and which the scent leads towards an abode (of spiritual truth)

Whoever hath no scent is without a nose, the scent (referred to) is that scent which is religious

When he has caught a scent and given no thanks for it, (that) ingratitude comes and devours his nose (deprives him of the organ of spiritual perception)

Give thanks (to God) and be a slave to those who give thanks be in their presence (as one) dead, be steadfast

Do not, like the vizier, make brigandage your stock-in-trade, do not turn the people away from the ritual prayer

The miscreant vizier had become (in appearance) a true religious counsellor, (but) he had craftily put garlic in the almond cake

How the sagacious among the Christians perceived the guile of the vizier

Whoever was possessed of (spiritual) discernment was feeling a sweet savour in his words and, joined therewith, bitterness

He (the vizier) was saying fine things mixed (with foul) he had poured some poison into the sugared julep

The outward sense of it was saying, "Be diligent in the Way," but in effect it was saying to the soul, "Be slack"

If the surface of silver is white and new, (yet) the hands and dress are blackened by it

Although fire is red-faced (bright and glorious) with sparks, look at the black behaviour (displayed) in its action

If the lightning appears luminous to the eye, (yet) from its distinctive property it is the robber of sight (it strikes men blind)

(As for) any (Christian) who was not wary and possessed of discernment, the words of him (the vizier) were (as) a collar on his neck

During six years, in separation from the king, the vizier became a refuge for the followers of Jesus

To him the people wholly surrendered their religion and their hearts at his command and decree they were ready to die

How the king sent messages in secret to the vizier

Messages (passed) between the king and him the king had words of comfort from him[1] in secret

The king wrote to him, saying, "O my fortunate one, the time is come quickly set my mind at ease"

He replied "Behold, O king, I am preparing to cast disorders into the religion of Jesus"

[1] Literally, "through him the king had comforts"

Explanation of the twelve tribes of the Christians

The people of Jesus had twelve amírs as rulers in authority over them.

Each party followed one amír and had become devoted to its own amír from desire (of worldly gain).

460 These twelve amírs and their followers became the slaves of that vizier of evil sign.

They all put trust in his words, they all took his procedure as a pattern.

Each amír would have given up his life in his presence at the time and hour (on the spot), if he (the vizier) had bidden him die.

How the vizier confused the ordinances of the Gospel

He prepared a scroll in the name of (addressed to) each one, the (written) form of each scroll (of) a different tenor,

The ordinances of each (of) a diverse kind, this contradicting that from the end to the beginning.

465 In one he made the path of asceticism and hunger to be the basis of repentance and the condition (necessary) for conversion.

In one he said: "Asceticism profits naught: in this Way there is no place (means) of deliverance but generosity."

In one he said: "Your hunger and generosity are (imply) association on your part (of other objects) with (Him who is) the object of your worship:

Excepting trust (in God) and complete resignation in sorrow and joy, all is a deceit and snare."

In one he said: "It is incumbent (on you) to serve (God)[1], else the thought of putting trust (in Him) is (a cause of) suspicion."

470 In one he said: "There are (Divine) commands and prohibitions, (but they) are not for practice (observance): they are (only) to show our weakness (inability to fulfil them),

So that we may behold our weakness therein and at that time recognise the power of God."

In one he said: "Do not regard your weakness: that weakness is an act of ingratitude. Beware!

Regard your power, for this power is from Him: know that your power is the gift of Him who is *Hu* (the Absolute God)."

In one he said: "Leave both these (qualities) behind: whatsoever is contained in sight (regard for other than God) is an idol (something which involves dualism)."

475 In one he said: "Do not put out this candle (of sight), for this sight is as a candle (lighting the way) to (interior) concentration.

[1] *I.e.* 'to perform the outward acts of worship.'

When you relinquish sight and phantasy (too soon), you will have put out the candle of union at midnight "

In one he said "Put it out[1]—have no fear—that you may see myriads of sights in exchange,

For by putting it out the candle of the spirit is increased by your self-denial your Laylá (beloved) becomes your Majnún (lover)

If any one abandons the world by his own (act of) renunciation, the world comes to him (with homage) more and more "

In one he said "That which God hath given you He made sweet to you in (at the time of) bringing it into existence

He made it easy (blessed) to you, and do you take it gladly do not throw yourself into anguish "

In one he said "Let go all that belongs to self, for it is wrong and bad to comply with your nature "

(Many) different roads have become easy (to follow) every one's religion has become (to him) as (dear) as life

If God's making (religion) easy were the (right) road, every Jew and Zoroastrian would have knowledge of Him

In one he said "That (alone) is made easy (blessed) that (nothing but) spiritual food should be the life of the heart "

When the enjoyments of the (sensual) nature are past, like brackish soil they raise no produce and crop

The produce thereof is naught but penitence, the sale thereof yields only loss, nothing more

That is not "easy" in the end, its (true) name ultimately is "hard "

Distinguish the hard from the easy consider (what is) the goodliness of this and that in the end

In one he said "Seek a master (teacher) you will not find foresight as to the end among the qualities derived from ancestors "

Every sort of religious sect foresaw the end (according to their own surmise) of necessity they fell captive to error

To foresee the end is not (as simple as) a hand-loom, otherwise, how would there have been difference in religions?

In one he said "*You* are the master, because you know the master

Be a man and be not subject to men Go, take your own head (choose your own way), and be not one whose head is turning (bewildered in search of a guide) "

In one he said "All this (multiplicity) is one whoever sees two is a squint-eyed manikin "

In one he said "How should a hundred be one? He who thinks this is surely mad "

[1] *I.e.* 'extinguish the sight which regards 'other,' see nothing but God "

The doctrines, every one, are contrary to each other. how should they be one? Are poison and sugar one?

Until you pass beyond (the difference of) poison and sugar, how will you catch a scent of unity and oneness?

Twelve books of this style and fashion were drawn up in writing by that enemy to the religion of Jesus

Showing how this difference lies in the form of the doctrine, not in the real nature of the Way

500 He had no scent (perception) of the unicolority of Jesus, nor had he a disposition from (imbued with) the tincture of the dyeing-vat of Jesus

From that pure vat a garment of a hundred colours would become as simple and one-coloured as light

(This) is not the unicolority from which weariness ensues, nay, it is (a case) like (that of) fishes and clear water

Although there are thousands of colours on dry land, (yet) fishes are at war with dryness

Who is the fish and what is the sea in (my) simile, that the King Almighty and Glorious should resemble them?

505 In (the world of) existence myriads of seas and fishes prostrate themselves in adoration before that Munificence and Bounty

How many a rain of largesse hath rained, so that the sea was made thereby to scatter pearls!

How many a sun of generosity hath shone, so that cloud and sea learned to be bountiful!

The sunbeams of Wisdom struck on soil and clay, so that the earth became receptive of the seed

The soil is faithful to its trust, and whatever you have sown in it, you carry away the (equivalent in) kind thereof without fraud (on the part of the soil)

510 It has derived this faithfulness from that (Divine) faithfulness, inasmuch as the sun of Justice has shone upon it

Until springtide brings the token of God, the soil does not reveal its secrets

The Bounteous One who gave to an inanimate thing these informations and this faithfulness and this righteousness,

His grace makes an inanimate thing informed, (while) His wrath makes blind the men of understanding

Soul and heart cannot endure that ferment to whom shall I speak? There is not in the world a single ear (capable of apprehension)

515 Wherever there was an ear, through Him it became an eye, wherever there was a stone, through Him it became a jasper

He is an alchemist--what is alchemy (compared with His action)? He is a giver of miracles (to prophets)—what is magic (compared with these miracles)?

This uttering of praise (to Him) is (really) the omission of praise on my part, for this (praise) is a proof of (my) being, and being is a sin

It behoves (us) to be not-being in the presence of His Being in His presence what is (our) being? Blind and blue

Were it not blind it would have been melted (consumed) by Him it would have known the heat of (the Divine) sun,

And were it not blue from mourning, how would this region (of phenomenal existence) have (remained) frozen like ice?

Setting forth how the vizier incurred perdition (by engaging) in this plot

The vizier was ignorant and heedless, like the (Jewish) king he was wrestling with the eternal and inevitable,

With a God so mighty that in a moment He causes a hundred worlds like ours to come into existence from non-existence

A hundred worlds like ours He displays to the sight, when He makes your eye seeing by (the light of) Himself

If the world appears to you vast and bottomless, know that to Omnipotence it is not (so much as) an atom

This world, indeed, is the prison of your souls oh, go in yonder direction, for there lies your open country

This world is finite, and truly that (other) is infinite image and form are a barrier to that Reality

The myriads of Pharaoh's lances were shattered by (the hand of) Moses (armed) with a single staff

Myriads were the therapeutic arts of Galen before Jesus and his (life-giving) breath they were a laughing-stock

Myriads were the books of (pre-Islamic) poems at the word of an illiterate (prophet) they were (put to) shame

(Confronted) with such an all-conquering Lord, how should any one not die (to self), unless he be a vile wretch?

Many a mind (strong and firm) as a mountain did He uproot, the cunning bird He hung up by its two feet

To sharpen the intelligence and wits is not the (right) way none but the broken (in spirit) wins the favour of the King

Oh, many the amassers of treasure, digging holes (in search of treasure), who became an ox's beard (dupe) to that vain schemer (the vizier)!

Who is the ox that you should become his beard? What is earth that you should become its stubble[1]?

When a woman became pale-faced (ashamed) of (her) wickedness, God metamorphosed her and made her Zuhra (the planet Venus)

To make a woman Zuhra was metamorphosis what (then) is it to become earth and clay, O contumacious one?

[1] Literally, "dry herbage."

Your spirit was bearing you towards the highest sphere (of heaven): you went towards the water and the clay amongst the lowest (of the low).

By this fall you metamorphosed yourself from that (state of) existence which was the envy of the (spiritual) intelligences.

Consider, then, how is (what is the character of) this metamorphosis compared with that metamorphosis (of the woman): this (which you have suffered) is exceedingly vile.

540 You urged the steed of ambition towards the stars: you did not acknowledge Adam who was worshipped (by the angels).

After all, you are a son of Adam. O degenerate! how long will you regard lowness as nobility?

How long will you say, "I will conquer a whole world, I will make this world full of myself"?

If the world should be filled with snow from end to end, the glow of the sun would melt it with a single look.

God by a single spark (of His mercy) maketh naught his (the vizier's) burden (of sin) and (the burden) of a hundred viziers and a hundred thousand.

545 He maketh the essence of that (false) imagination to be wisdom, He maketh the essence of that poisoned water to be a (wholesome) drink.

That which raises doubt He turneth into certainty, He maketh lovingkindnesses grow from the causes of hatred.

He cherisheth Abraham in the fire, He turneth fear into security of spirit.

By His burning (destroying) of secondary causes I am distraught, in (my) fancies of Him I am like a sophist (sceptic or agnostic).

How the vizier started another plan to mislead the (Christian) folk.

The vizier formed in his mind another plan: he abandoned preaching and sat alone in seclusion.

550 He inspired ardour in his disciples from (their) longing (to see him), he remained in seclusion forty or fifty days.

The people became mad from longing for him and on account of being separated from his (spiritual) feeling and discourse and intuition.

They were making supplication and lament, while he in solitude was bent double by austerities.

They said, "Without thee we have no light: how (what) is the state of a blind man without a leader?

By way of showing favour (to us) and for God's sake, do not keep us parted from thee any longer.

555 We are as children and thou art our nurse: do thou spread over us that shadow (of thy protection)."

He said, "My soul is not far from them that love (me), but there is no permission to come forth"

Those amírs came for intercession, and the disciples came in reproach,

Saying, "O noble sir, what a misfortune is this for us! Without thee we are left orphaned (deprived) of our hearts and our religion

Thou art making a pretence while we in grief are heaving cold (fruitless) sighs from the burning heat of our hearts

We have become accustomed to thy sweet discourse, we have drunk of the milk of thy wisdom

Allah! Allah! do not thou (O vizier) treat us with such cruelty show kindness to-day, do not (put off till) to-morrow

Does thy heart give to thee (consent) that these who have lost their hearts (to thee) should at last, being without thee, become (numbered) amongst them that have nothing left?

They all are writhing like fishes on dry land let loose the water, remove the dam from the stream

O thou like whom there is none in the world, for God's sake, for God's sake, come to the aid of thy people!"

How the vizier refused the request of the disciples

He said "Beware, O ye enslaved by words and talk, ye who seek admonition (consisting) of the speech of the tongue and (the hearing) of the ear

Put cotton-wool in the ear of the low (physical) sense, take off the bandage of (that) sense from your eyes!

The ear of the head is the cotton-wool of the ear of the conscience until the former becomes deaf, that inward (ear) is deaf

Become without sense and without ear and without thought, that ye may hear the call (of God to the soul), '*Return!*'"

So long as thou art (engaged) in the conversation of wakefulness, how wilt thou catch any scent of the conversation of sleep?

Our speech and action is the exterior journey the interior journey is above the sky

The (physical) sense saw (only) dryness, because it was born of dryness (earth) the Jesus of the spirit set foot on the sea

The journey of the dry body befell on dry land, (but) the journey of the spirit set foot (took place) in the heart of the sea

Since thy life has passed in travelling on land, now mountain, now river, now desert,

Whence wilt thou gain the Water of Life? Where wilt thou cleave the waves of the Sea?

The waves of earth are our imagination and understanding

and thought, the waves of water are (mystical) self-effacement and intoxication and death (*faná*)

Whilst thou art in this (sensual) intoxication, thou art far from that (mystical) intoxication, whilst thou art drunken with this, thou art blind to that cup

Outward speech and talk is as dust do thou for a time make a habit of silence Take heed!

How the disciples repeated their request that he should interrupt his seclusion

They all said "O sage who seekest a crevice (means of evasion), say not to us this (word of) guile and harshness

Lay on the beast a burden in proportion to its endurance, lay on the weak a task in proportion to their strength

580 The bait for every bird is according to its (the bird's) measure (capacity) how should a fig be the food (lure) for every bird?

If you give a babe bread instead of milk, take it (for granted) that the poor babe will die of the bread,

(Yet) afterwards, when it grows teeth, that babe will of its own accord ask for bread

When an unfledged bird begins to fly, it becomes a mouthful for any rapacious cat,

(But) when it grows wings, it will fly of itself without trouble and without whistling (prompting), good or bad

585 Thy speech makes the Devil silent, thy words make our ears (full of) intelligence

Our ears are (full of) intelligence when thou art speaking, our dry land is a river when thou art the ocean

With thee, earth is better to us than heaven, O thou by whom (the world from) Arcturus to the Fish is illumined!

Without thee, darkness is over heaven for us, (but) compared with thee, O Moon, who is this heaven at all?

The heavens have the form of sublimity, (but) the essence of sublimity belongs to the pure spirit

590 The form of sublimity is for bodies, beside the essence (reality) bodies are (mere) names"

The refusal of the vizier to interrupt his seclusion

He said "Cut short your arguments, let my advice make its way into your souls and hearts

If I am trustworthy, the trustworthy is not doubted, even though I should call heaven earth

If I am (endowed with) perfection, why (this) disbelief in my perfection? and if I am not (perfect), why this molestation and annoyance?

I will not go forth from this seclusion, because I am occupied with inward experiences"

How the disciples raised objections against the vizier's secluding himself

They all said "O vizier, it is not disbelief our words are not as the words of strangers

The tears of our eyes are running because of our separation from thee, sigh after sigh is going (up) from the midst of our souls

A babe does not contend with its nurse, but it weeps, although it knows neither evil nor good

We are as the harp and thou art striking (it with) the plectrum (playing on it) the lamentation is not from us, it is thou that art making lamentation

We are as the flute, and the music in us is from thee, we are as the mountain, and the echo in us is from thee

We are as pieces of chess (engaged) in victory and defeat our victory and defeat is from thee, O thou whose qualities are comely!

Who are we, O thou soul of our souls, that we should remain in being beside thee?

We and our existences are (really) non-existences thou art the absolute Being which manifests the perishable (causes phenomena to appear)

We all are lions, but lions on a banner because of the wind they are rushing onward from moment to moment

Their onward rush is visible, and the wind is unseen may that which is unseen not fail from us!

Our wind (that whereby we are moved) and our being are of thy gift, our whole existence is from thy bringing (us) into being

Thou didst show the delightfulness of Being unto not-being, (after) thou hadst caused not-being to fall in love with thee

Take not away the delightfulness of thy bounty, take not away thy dessert and wine and wine-cup!

And if thou take it away, who is there that will make inquiry? How should the picture strive with the painter?

Do not look on us, do not fix thy gaze on us look on thine own kindness and generosity

We were not, and there was no demand on our part, (yet) thy grace was hearkening to our unspoken prayer (and calling us into existence)"

Before the painter and the brush the picture is helpless and bound like a child in the womb

Before Omnipotence all the people of the (Divine) court of audience (the world) are as helpless as the (embroiderer's) fabric before the needle

Now He makes the picture thereon (one of) the Devil, now (of) Adam, now He makes the picture thereon (one of) joy, now (one of) grief

There is no power (to any one) that he should move a hand in defence, no (right of) speech, that he should utter a word concerning injury or benefit

615 Recite from the Qur'án the interpretation of (*i e* a text which interprets) the (preceding) verse God said, ***Thou didst not throw when thou threwest***

If we let fly an arrow, that (action) is not from us we are (only) the bow, and the shooter of the arrow is God

This is not *jabr* (compulsion), it is the meaning of *jabbárí* (almightiness) the mention of almightiness is for the sake of (inspiring us with) humility

Our humility is evidence of necessity, (but) our sense of guilt is evidence of freewill

If there were not freewill, what is this shame? And what is this sorrow and guilty confusion and abashment?

620 Why is there chiding between masters and pupils? Why is the mind changing (so as to depart) from plans (already formed)?

And if you say that he (the assertor of freewill) takes no heed of His (God's) compulsion, (and that) God's moon has become hidden in His cloud,

There is a good answer to this, if you hearken, you will relinquish unbelief and incline towards the (true) religion

Remorse and humility occur at the time of illness the time of illness is wholly wakefulness (of conscience)

At the time when you are becoming ill, you pray God to forgive your trespass,

625 The foulness of your sin is shown to you, you resolve to come back to the (right) way,

You make promises and vows that henceforth your chosen course (of action) will be nothing but obedience (to God)

Therefore it has become certain that illness gives to you conscience and wakefulness

Note, then, this principle, O thou that seekest the principle, every one who suffers pain has caught the scent (thereof)

The more wakeful any one is, the more full of suffering he is, the more aware (of God) he is, the paler he is in countenance

630 If you are aware of His *jabr* (compulsion), where is your humility? Where is your feeling of (being loaded with) the chain of His *jabbárí* (almightiness)?

How should one make merry who is bound in chains? When does the captive in prison behave like the man who is free?

And if you consider that your foot is shackled (and that) the king's officers are sitting (as custodians) over you,

Then do not act like an officer (tyrannously) towards the helpless, inasmuch as that is not the nature and habit of a helpless man

Since you do not feel His compulsion, do not say (that you are compelled), and if you feel it, where is the sign of your feeling?

In every act for which you have inclination, you are clearly conscious of your power (to perform it),

(But) in every act for which you have no inclination and desire, in regard to that (act) you have become a necessitarian, saying, "This is from God"

The prophets are necessitarians in regard to the works of this world, (while) the infidels are necessitarians in regard to the works of the next world

To the prophets the works of the next world are (a matter of) freewill, to the foolish the works of this world are (a matter of) freewill,

Because every bird flies to its own congener it (follows) behind, and its spirit (goes) before, (leading it on)

Inasmuch as the infidels were congeners of *Sijjín* (Hell), they were well-disposed to the prison (*sijn*) of this world

Inasmuch as the prophets were congeners of *'Illiyyín* (Heaven), they went towards the *'Illiyyín* of spirit and heart

This discourse hath no end, but let us (now) relate the story to its completion

How the vizier made the disciples lose hope of his abandoning seclusion

The vizier cried out from within, "O disciples, be this made known to you from me,

That Jesus hath given me a such-like message 'Be separated from all friends and kinsfolk

Set thy face to the wall, sit alone, and choose to be secluded even from thine own existence'

After this there is no permission (for me) to speak, after this I have nothing to do with talk

Farewell, O friends! I am dead I have carried my belongings up to the Fourth Heaven,

In order that beneath the fiery sphere I may not burn like firewood in woe and perdition,

(But) henceforth may sit beside Jesus at the top of the Fourth Heaven"

How the vizier appointed each one of the amirs separately as his successor

And then he summoned those amirs one by one and conversed with each (of them) alone

He said to each one, "In the religion of Jesus thou art the vicar of God and my *khalífa* (vicegerent),

And those other amírs are thy followers Jesus hath made all of them thy assistants

Any amír who lifts his neck (in rebellion), seize him and either kill him or hold him captive,

But do not declare this whilst I am alive do not seek this supreme authority until I am dead

655 Until I am dead, do not reveal this do not lay claim to sovereignty and dominion

Here is this scroll and the ordinances of the Messiah recite them distinctly, one by one, to his people"

Thus he spoke to each amír separately, (saying), "There is no vicar in the religion of God except thee"

He honoured each, one by one, (in this way) whatever he said to that (amír) he also said to this

To each he gave one scroll every one was purposely the contrary of the other

660 All the scrolls were different, like the forms of the letters (of the alphabet) from *yá* to *alif*

The rule (laid down) in this scroll was contrary to the rule in that we have already explained (the nature of) this contradiction

How the vizier killed himself in seclusion

After that, he shut the door for other forty days (and then) killed himself and escaped from his existence

When the people learned of his death, there came to pass at his grave the scene of the Resurrection[1]

So great a multitude gathered at his grave, tearing their hair, rending their garments in wild grief for him,

665 That only God can reckon the number of them—Arabs and Turks and Greeks and Kurds

They put his (grave's) earth on their heads, they deemed anguish for him to be the remedy for themselves

During a month those multitudes over his grave made a way for blood from their eyes (shed tears of anguish)

How the people of Jesus—on him be peace!—asked the amírs, "Which one of you is the successor?"

After a month the people said, "O chiefs, which of (the) amírs is designated in his place,

That we may acknowledge him as our religious leader instead of him (the vizier), and give our hands and skirts into his hand?

670 Since the sun is gone and has branded us (left the brand of sorrow in our hearts), is not a lamp the (only) resource in his stead?

[1] *I.e.* a scene of tumultuous grief and lamentation

Since union with the beloved has vanished from before our eyes, we must needs have a vicar as a memorial of him (*i e* one who will recall him to our memory)

Since the rose is past and the garden ravaged, from whom shall we get the perfume of the rose? From rosewater "

Inasmuch as God comes not into sight, these prophets are the vicars of God

Nay, I have said (this) wrongly, for if you suppose that the vicar and He who is represented by the vicar are two, it (such a thought) is bad, not good

Nay, they are two so long as you are a worshipper of form, (but) they have become one to him who has escaped from (consciousness of) form

When you look at the form, your eye is two, look at its (the eye's) light, which grew from the eye

'Tis impossible to distinguish the light of the two eyes, when a man has cast his look upon their light

If ten lamps are present in (one) place, each differs in form from another

To distinguish without any doubt the light of each, when you turn your face towards their light, is impossible

If you count a hundred apples or a hundred quinces, they do not remain a hundred (but) become one, when you crush them (together)

In things spiritual there is no division and no numbers, in things spiritual there is no partition and no individuals

Sweet is the oneness of the Friend with His friends catch (and cling to) the foot of spirit Form is headstrong[1]

Make headstrong form waste away with tribulation, that beneath it you may descry unity, like a (buried) treasure,

And if you waste it not away, His favours will waste it—oh, my heart is His vassal

He even showeth Himself to (our) hearts, He seweth the tattered frock of the dervish[2]

Simple were we and all one substance, we were all without head and without foot yonder

We were one substance, like the Sun, we were knotless and pure, like water

When that goodly Light took form, it became (many in) number like the shadows of a battlement

Rase ye the battlement with the *manjaniq* (mangonel), that difference may vanish from amidst this company (of shadows)

I would have explained this (matter) with (eager) contention, but I fear lest some (weak) mind may stumble

The points (involved in it) are sharp as a sword of steel, if you have not the shield (of capacity to understand), turn back and flee!

[1] *I e* opposed to spiritual unity [2] *I e* He unites the mystic with Himself

Do not come without shield against this adamant (keen blade), for the sword is not ashamed of cutting

For this cause I have put the sword in sheath, that none who misreads may read contrariwise (in a sense contrary to the true meaning of my words)

We come (now) to complete the tale and (speak) of the loyalty of the multitude of the righteous,

Who rose up after (the death of) this leader, demanding a vicar in his place

The quarrel of the amírs concerning the succession

One of those amírs advanced and went before that loyal-minded people

"Behold," said he, "I am that man's vicar I am the vicar of Jesus at the present time

Look, this scroll is my proof that after him the vicarate belongs to me"

Another amír came forth from ambush his pretension regarding the vicegerency was the same,

He too produced a scroll from under his arm, so that in both (amírs) there arose the Jewish anger

The rest of the amírs, one after another, drawing swords of keen mettle,

Each with a sword and a scroll in his hand, fell to combat like raging elephants

Hundreds of thousands of Christians were slain, so that there were mounds of severed heads,

Blood flowed, on left and right, like a torrent, mountains of this dust (of battle) rose in the air

The seeds of dissension which he (the vizier) had sown had become a calamity (cause of destruction) to their heads

The walnuts (bodies) were broken, and those which had the kernel had, after being slain, a spirit pure and fair

Slaughter and death which befalls the bodily frame is like breaking pomegranates and apples

That which is sweet becomes pomegranate-syrup, and that which is rotten is naught but noise

That which has reality is made manifest (after death), and that which is rotten is put to shame

Go, strive after reality, O worshipper of form, inasmuch as reality is the wing on form's body

Consort with the followers of reality, that you may both win the gift and be generous (in giving yourself up to God)

Beyond dispute, in this body the spirit devoid of reality is even as a wooden sword in the sheath

Whilst it remains in the sheath, it is (apparently) valuable,

(but) when it has come forth it is an implement (only fit) for burning

Do not take a wooden sword into the battle! First see (whether your sword is a real one), in order that your plight may not be wretched

If it is made of wood, go, seek another, and if it is adamant, march forward joyously

The sword (of reality) is in the armoury of the saints to see (and associate with) them is for you (as precious as) the Elixir

All the wise have said this same thing the wise man[1] is *a (Divine) mercy to created beings*

If you would buy a pomegranate, buy (it when it is) laughing (having its rind cleft open), so that its laughter (openness) may give information as to its seeds

Oh, blessed is its laughter, for through its mouth it shows the heart, like a pearl from the casket of the spirit

Unblest was the laughter (openness) of the red anemone, from whose mouth appeared the blackness of its heart

The laughing pomegranate makes the garden laughing (gay and blooming) companionship with (holy) men makes you one of the (holy) men

Though you be rock or marble, you will become a jewel when you reach the man of heart (the saint)

Plant the love of the holy ones within your spirit, do not give your heart (to aught) save to the love of them whose hearts are glad

Go not to the neighbourhood of despair there are hopes Go not in the direction of darkness there are suns

The heart leads you into the neighbourhood of the men of heart (the saints), the body leads you into the prison of water and earth

Oh, give your heart food from (conversation with) one who is in accord with it, go, seek (spiritual) advancement from one who is advanced

How honour was paid to the description of Muṣṭafa (Mohammed), on whom be peace, which was mentioned in the Gospel

The name of Mustafá was in the Gospel—(Muṣṭafá) the chief of the prophets, the sea of purity

There was mention of his (external) characteristics and appearance, there was mention of his warring and fasting and eating

A party among the Christians, for the sake of the Divine reward, whenever (in reading the Gospel) they came to that name and discourse,

[1] *I.e* the prophet or saint who knows God

730 Would bestow kisses on that noble name and stoop their faces towards that beauteous description.

In this tribulation of which we have told, that party were secure from tribulation and dread,

Secure from the mischief of the amírs and the vizier, seeking refuge in the protection of the Name of Ahmad (Mohammed).

Their offspring also multiplied: the Light of Ahmad aided and befriended them.

And the other party among the Christians (who) were holding the Name of Ahmad in contempt,

735 They became contemptible and despised through dissensions caused by the evil-counselling and evil-plotting vizier;

Moreover, their religion and their law became corrupted in consequence of the scrolls which set forth all perversely.

The Name of Ahmad gives such help as this, so that (one may judge) how his Light keeps guard (over his followers).

Since the Name of Ahmad became (to the Christians) an impregnable fortress, what then must be the Essence of that trusted Spirit?

The story of another Jewish king who endeavoured to destroy the religion of Jesus.

After this irremediable bloodshed which befell through the affliction (brought upon the Christians) by the vizier,

740 Another king, of the progeny of that Jew, addressed himself to the destruction of the people of Jesus.

If you desire information about this second outbreak, read the chapter of the Qur'án (beginning) *By Heaven which hath the (zodiacal) signs.*

This second king set foot in the evil way that was originated by the former king.

Whosoever establishes an evil way (practice), towards him goes malediction every hour.

The righteous departed and their ways remained, and from the vile there remained (nothing but) injustice and execrations.

745 Until the Resurrection, the face of every congener of those wicked men who comes into existence is turned towards that one (who belongs to his own kind).

Vein by vein[1] is this sweet water and bitter water, flowing in (God's) creatures until the blast of the trumpet (at the Resurrection).

To the righteous is the inheritance of the sweet water. What is that inheritance? *We have caused (those of Our servants whom We have chosen) to inherit the Book.*

If you will consider, the supplications of the seekers (of God) are rays (proceeding) from the substance of prophethood.

[1] *I.e.* separate and never mingling with each other.

The rays are circling with the substances (whence they spring) the ray goes (ultimately) in the direction where that (substance) is

The window-gleam runs round the house, because the sun goes from sign to sign of the zodiac

Any one who has affinity with a star (planet) has a concurrence (of qualities) with his star

If his ascendant star be Venus, his whole inclination and love and desire is for joy,

And if he be one born under Mars, one whose nature is to shed blood, he seeks war and malignity and enmity

Beyond the (material) stars are stars in which is no conflagration or sinister aspect,

(Stars) moving in other heavens, not these seven heavens known to all,

(Stars) immanent in the radiance of the light of God, neither joined to each other nor separate from each other

When any one's ascendant (fortune) is (from) those stars, his soul burns the infidels in driving (them) off

His anger is not (like) the anger of the man born under Mars —perverse[1], and of such nature that it is (now) dominant and (now) dominated

The dominant light (of the saints) is secure from defect and dimness between the two fingers of the Light of God

God hath scattered that light over (all) spirits, (but only) the fortunate have held up their skirts (to receive it),

And he (that is fortunate), having gained that strown largesse of light, has turned his face away from all except God

Whosoever has lacked (such) a skirt of love is left without share in that strown largesse of light

The faces of particulars are set towards the universal nightingales play the game of love with the rose

The ox has his colour outside, but in the case of a man seek the red and yellow hues within

The good colours are from the vat of purity, the colour of the wicked is from the black water of iniquity

The baptism of God is the name of that subtle colour, *the curse of God* is the smell of that gross colour

That which is of the sea is going to the sea it is going to the same place whence it came—

From the mountain-top the swift-rushing torrents, and from our body the soul whose motion is mingled with love

[1] Literally, "with face inverted' i e directed towards base ends

How the Jewish king made a fire and placed an idol beside it, saying, "Whoever bows down to this idol shall escape the fire"

Now see what a plan this currish Jew contrived! He set up an idol beside the fire,

770 Saying, "He that bows down to this idol is saved, and if he bow not, he shall sit in the heart of the fire."

Inasmuch as he did not give due punishment to this idol of self[1], from the idol of his self the other idol was born.

The idol of your self is the mother of (all) idols, because that (material) idol is (only) a snake, while this (spiritual) idol is a dragon.

The self is (as) iron and stone (whence fire is produced), while the (material) idol is (as) the sparks: those sparks are quieted (quenched) by water.

(But) how should the stone and iron be allayed by water? How should a man, having these twain, be secure?

775 The idol is the black water in a jug; the self is a fountain for the black water.

That sculptured idol is like the black torrent; the idol-making self is a fountain full of water for it.

A single piece of stone will break a hundred pitchers, but the fountain is jetting forth water incessantly.

'Tis easy to break an idol, very easy; to regard the self as easy (to subdue) is folly, folly.

O son, if you seek (to know) the form of the self, read the story of Hell with its seven gates.

780 Every moment (there proceeds from the self) an act of deceit, and in every one of those deceits a hundred Pharaohs are drowned together with their followers.

Flee to the God of Moses and to Moses, do not from Pharaoh's quality (rebellious insolence) spill the water of the Faith.

Lay your hand on (cleave to) the One (God) and Ahmad (Mohammed)! O brother, escape from the Bu Jahl of the body!

How a child began to speak amidst the fire and urged the people to throw themselves into the fire

That Jew brought to that idol a woman with her child, and the fire was blazing.

He took the child from her and cast it into the fire: the woman was affrighted and withdrew her heart from (abandoned) her faith.

785 She was about to bow down before the idol (when) the child cried, "Verily, I am not dead.

[1] *Nafs*, the appetitive soul, "the flesh."

Come in, O mother I am happy here, although in appearance I am amidst the fire

The fire is a spell that binds the eye for the sake of screening (the truth), this is (in reality) a Divine mercy which has raised its head from the collar (has been manifested from the Unseen)

Come in, mother, and see the evidence of God, that thou mayst behold the delight of God's elect

Come in, and see water that has the semblance of fire, (come away) from a world which is (really) fire and (only) has the semblance of water

Come in, and see the mysteries of Abraham, who in the fire found cypress and jessamine

I was seeing death at the time of birth from thee sore was my dread of falling from thee,

(But) when I was born, I escaped from the narrow prison (of the womb) into a world of pleasant air and beautiful colour

Now I deem the (earthly) world to be like the womb, since in this fire I have seen such rest

In this fire I have seen a world wherein every atom possesses the (life-giving) breath of Jesus

Lo, (it is) a world apparently non-existent (but) essentially existent, while that (other) world is apparently existent (but) has no permanence

Come in, mother, (I beseech thee) by the right of motherhood see this fire, how it hath no fieriness

Come in, mother, for felicity is come, come in, mother, do not let fortune slip from thy hand

Thou hast seen the power of that (Jewish) cur come in, that thou mayst see the power of God's grace

'Tis (only) out of pity that I am drawing thy feet (hither), for indeed such is my rapture that I have no care for thee

Come in and call the others also, for the King has spread a (festal) table within the fire

O true believers, come in, all of you except this sweetness (*'adhbí*) all is torment (*'adháb*)

Oh, come in, all of you, like moths, (come) into this fortune which hath a hundred springtimes "

(Thus) he was crying amidst that multitude the souls of the people were filled with awe

After that, the folk, men and women (alike), cast themselves unwittingly[1] into the fire—

Without custodian, without being dragged, for love of the Friend, because from Him is the sweetening of every bitterness—

[1] Literally, "beside themselves"

Until it came to pass that the (king's) myrmidons were holding back the people, saying, "Do not enter the fire!"

The Jew became black-faced (covered with shame) and dismayed, he became sorry and sick at heart,

Because the people grew more loving (ardent) in their Faith and more firm in mortification (*faná*) of the body

Thanks (be to God), the Devil's plot caught *him* in its toils, thanks (be to God), the Devil saw himself disgraced[1]

810 That which he was rubbing (the shame he was inflicting) on the faces of those persons (the Christians) was all accumulated on the visage of that vile wretch

He who was busy rending the garment (honour and integrity) of the people—his own (garment) was rent, (while) they were unhurt

How the mouth remained awry of a man who pronounced the name of Mohammed, on whom be peace, derisively

He made his mouth wry and called the name of Ahmad (Mohammed) in derision his mouth remained awry

He came back, saying, "Pardon me, O Mohammed, O thou to whom belong the (Divine) gifts of esoteric knowledge

In my folly I was ridiculing thee, (but) I myself was related to ridicule and deserving it"

815 When God wishes to rend the veil of any one (expose him to shame), He turns his inclination towards reviling holy men

When God wishes to hide the blame of any one, he (that person) does not breathe a word of blame against the blameworthy

When God wishes to help us, He turns our inclination towards humble lament

Oh, happy the eye that is weeping for His sake! Oh, fortunate the heart that is seared[2] for His sake!

The end of every weeping is laughter at last, the man who foresees the end is a blessed servant (of God)

820 Wherever is flowing water, there is greenery wherever are running tears, (the Divine) mercy is shown

Be moaning and moist-eyed like the water-wheel, that green herbs may spring up from the courtyard of your soul

If you desire tears, have mercy on one who sheds tears, if you desire mercy, show mercy to the weak

How the fire reproached the Jewish king

The king turned his face to the fire, saying, "O fierce-tempered one, where is thy world-consuming natural disposition?

How art thou not burning? What has become of thy specific

[1] Literally "black faced" [2] Literally, "roasted"

property? Or has thy intention changed because of our fortune?[1]

Thou hast no pity (even) on the fire-worshipper how (then) has he been saved who does not worship thee?

Never, O fire, art thou patient how burnest thou not? What is it? Hast thou not the power?

Is this a spell, I wonder, that binds the eye or the mind? How does the lofty pyre not burn?

Has some one bewitched thee? Or is it magic, or is thy unnatural behaviour[2] from our fortune?"

The fire said "I am the same, I am fire come in, that thou mayst feel my heat

My nature and element have not changed I am the sword of God and by (His) leave I cut

The Turcoman dogs fawn at the tent-door before the guest,

But if any one having the face of a stranger pass by the tent, he will see the dogs rushing at him like lions

I am not less than a dog in devotion, nor is God less than a Turcoman in life (living power)"

If the fire of your nature make you suffer pain, it burns by command of the Lord of religion,

If the fire of your nature give you joy, (that is because) the Lord of religion puts joy therein

When you feel pain, ask pardon of God pain, by command of the Creator, is efficacious

When He pleases, pain itself becomes joy, bondage[3] itself becomes freedom

Air and earth and water and fire are (His) slaves with you and me they are dead, but with God they are alive

Before God, fire is always standing (ready to do His behest), writhing continually day and night, like a lover

If you strike stone on iron, it (the fire) leaps out 'tis by God's command that it puts forth its foot

Do not strike together the iron and stone of injustice, for these two generate like man and woman

The stone and the iron are indeed causes, but look higher, O good man!

For this (external) cause was produced by that (spiritual) cause when did a cause ever proceed from itself without a cause?

And those causes which guide the prophets on their way are higher than these (external) causes

That (spiritual) cause makes this (external) cause operative, sometimes, again, it makes it fruitless and ineffectual

(Ordinary) minds are familiar with this (external) cause, but the prophets are familiar with those (spiritual) causes

[1] *I e* because Fate has so ordained

[2] Literally, "the contrariety to thy nature" [3] Literally, "the fetter"

What is (the meaning of) this (word) "cause" (*sabab*) in Arabic? Say "cord" (*rasan*) This cord came into this well (the world) by (Divine) artifice

The revolution of the water-wheel causes the cord (to move), (but) not to see the mover of the water-wheel is an error

Beware, beware! Do not regard these cords of causation in the world as (deriving their movement) from the giddy wheel (of heaven),

850 Lest you remain empty and giddy like the (celestial) wheel, lest through brainlessness you burn like *markh* wood

By the command of God air becomes fire both are drunken with the wine of God

O son, when you open your eyes you will see that from God too are the water of clemency and the fire of anger

Had not the soul of the wind been informed by God, how would it have distinguished (the believers and unbelievers) amongst the people of 'Ád?

The story of the wind which destroyed the people of 'Ád in the time of (the prophet) Hud, on whom be peace

Húd drew a line round the believers the wind would become soft (subside) when it reached that place,

855 (Although) it was dashing to pieces in the air all who were outside of the line

Likewise Shaybán the shepherd used to draw a visible line round his flock

Whenever he went to the Friday service at prayer-time, in order that the wolf might not raid and ravage there

No wolf would go into that (circle), nor would any sheep stray beyond that mark,

The wind of the wolf's and sheeps' concupiscence was barred because of (by) the circle of the man of God

860 Even so, to those who know God ('*árifan*) the wind of Death is soft and pleasant as the breeze (that wafts the scent) of (loved) ones like Joseph

The fire did not set its teeth in Abraham how should it bite him, since he is the chosen of God?

The religious were not afflicted by the fire of lust which bore all the rest down to the bottom of the earth

The waves of the sea, when they charged on by God's command, discriminated the people of Moses from the Egyptians

The earth, when the (Divine) command came, drew Qárun (Korah) with his gold and throne into its lowest depth

865 The water and clay, when it fed on the breath of Jesus, spread wings and pinions, became a bird, and flew

Your glorification (of God) is an exhalation from the water

and clay (of your body): it became a bird of Paradise through the breathing (into it) of your heart's sincerity.

Mount Sinai, from (seeing) the radiance of Moses, began to dance, became a perfect Sufi, and was freed from blemish.

What wonder if the mountain became a venerable Ṣufi? The body of Moses also was (formed) from a piece of clay.

How the Jewish king scoffed and denied and would not accept the counsel of his intimates

The king of the Jews beheld these marvellous things, (but) he had naught (to say) except mockery and denial.

His counsellors said, "Do not let (this injustice) go beyond bounds, do not drive the steed of obstinacy so far."

He handcuffed the counsellors and confined them; he committed one injustice after another.[1]

When the matter reached this pass, a shout came—"Hold thy foot (stop), O cur! for Our vengeance is come."

After that, the fire blazed up forty ells high, became a ring, and consumed those Jews.

From fire was their origin in the beginning: they went (back) to their origin in the end.

That company were born of fire: the way of particulars is towards the universal.

They were only a fire to consume the true believers: their fire consumed itself like rubbish.

He *whose mother is Hawiya* (Hell-fire)—*Hawiya* shall become his cell (abode).

The mother of the child is (always) seeking it: the fundamentals pursue the derivatives.

If water is imprisoned in a tank, the wind sucks it up, for it (the wind) belongs to the original (source):

It sets it free, it wafts it away to its source, little by little, so that you do not see its wafting;

And our souls likewise this breath (of ours) steals away, little by little, from the prison of the world.

The perfumes of our (good) words ascend even unto Him, ascending from us whither God knoweth.

Our breaths soar up with the choice (words), as a gift from us, to the abode of everlastingness;

Then comes to us the recompense of our speech, a double (recompense) thereof, as a mercy from (God) the Glorious;

Then He causes us to repair to (makes us utter) good words like those (already uttered), that His servant may obtain (something more) of what he has obtained.

Thus do they (our good words) ascend while it (the Divine

[1] Literally, 'he made injustice (to be) link on link,' i.e. continuous."

mercy) descends continually mayst thou never cease to keep up that (ascent and descent)![1]

Let us speak Persian![1] the meaning is that this attraction (by which God draws the soul towards Himself) comes from the same quarter whence came that savour (spiritual delight experienced in and after prayer)

The eyes of every set of people remain (turned) in the direction where one day they satisfied a (longing for) delight

The delight of (every) kind is certainly in its own kind (congener) the delight of the part, observe, is in its whole,

890 Or else, that (part) is surely capable of (attachment to) a (different) kind and, when it has attached itself thereto, becomes homogeneous with it,

As (for instance) water and bread, which were not our congeners, became homogeneous with us and increased within us (added to our bulk and strength)

Water and bread have not the appearance of being our congeners (but) from consideration of the end (final result) deem them to be homogeneous (with us)

And if our delight is (derived) from something not homogeneous, that (thing) will surely resemble the congener

That which (only) bears a resemblance is a loan a loan is impermanent in the end

895 Although the bird is delighted by (the fowler's) whistle, it takes fright when it (sees him and) does not find its own congener

Although the thirsty man is delighted by the mirage, he runs away when he comes up to it, and seeks for water

Although the insolvent are pleased with base gold, yet that (gold) is put to shame in the mint

(Take heed) lest giddedness (imposture) cast you out of the (right) way, lest false imagination cast you into the well

Seek the story (illustrating this) from (the book of) Kalila (and Dimna), and search out the moral (contained) in the story

Setting forth how the beasts of chase told the lion to trust in God and cease from exerting himself

900 A number of beasts of chase in a pleasant valley were harassed by a lion

Inasmuch as the lion was (springing) from ambush and carrying them away, that pasturage had become unpleasant to them all

They made a plot they came to the lion saying ' We will keep thee full-fed by means of a (fixed) allowance

Do not go after any prey beyond thy allowance, in order that this grass may not become bitter to us '

[1] The five preceding verses are in Arabic

How the lion answered the beasts and explained the advantage of exertion

"Yes," said he, "if I see (find) good faith (on your part), not fraud, for often have I seen (suffered) frauds from Zayd and Bakr[1]

905 I am done to death by the cunning and fraud of men, I am bitten by the sting of (human) snake and scorpion,

(But) worse than all men in fraud and spite is the man of the flesh (*nafs*) lying in wait within me

My ear heard 'The believer is not bitten (twice),' and adopted (this) saying of the Prophet with heart and soul"

How the beasts asserted the superiority of trust in God to exertion and acquisition

They all said "O knowing sage, let precaution alone it is of no avail against the Divine decree

In precaution is the embroilment of broil and woe go, put thy trust in God trust in God is better

910 Do not grapple with Destiny, O fierce and furious one, lest Destiny also pick a quarrel with thee

One must be dead in presence of the decree of God, so that no blow may come from *the Lord of the daybreak*"

How the lion upheld the superiority of exertion and acquisition to trust in God and resignation

"Yes," he said, "(but) if trust in God is the (true) guide, (yet use of) the means too is the Prophet's rule (*Sunna*)

The Prophet said with a loud voice, 'While trusting in God bind the knee of thy camel'

Hearken to the signification of 'The earner (worker) is beloved of God' through trusting in God do not become neglectful as to the (ways and) means"

How the beasts preferred trust in God to exertion

915 The party (of beasts) answered him, saying, "Regard acquisition (work), arising from the infirmity of (God's) creatures, as a mouthful of deceit proportionate to the size of the gullet

There is no work better than trust in God what, indeed, is dearer (to God) than resignation?

Often do they flee from affliction (only) to (fall into) affliction, often do they recoil from the snake (only) to (meet with) the dragon

[1] Zayd and Bakr are typical names of men in Arabic

Man devised (something), and his device was a snare (wherein he was trapped) that which he thought to be life was (actually) the drainer of his blood (his destroyer)

He locked the door while the foe was in the house the plot of Pharaoh was a story of this sort

920 That vengeful man slew hundreds of thousands of babes, while the one he was searching after was in his (Pharaoh's) house

Since in our eyesight (foresight) there is much defect, go, let your own sight pass away (*faná*) in the sight of the Friend (God)

His sight for ours—what a goodly recompense! In His sight you will find the whole object of your desire

So long as the child could neither grasp (exert strength) nor run, he had nothing to ride on but his father's neck,

When he became a busybody and plied hand and foot (exerted himself), he fell into trouble and wretchedness[1]

925 The spirits of created beings, before (the creation of) hand and foot, by reason of their faithfulness were flying in (the realm of) purity,

When they were constrained by the (Divine) command, *Get ye down*, they became engaoled in anger and covetousness and contentment

We are the family of the Lord and craving after milk (like infants) he (the Prophet) said, 'The people are God's family'

He who gives rain from heaven is also able, from His mercy, to give us bread'

How the lion again pronounced exertion to be superior to trust in God

"Yes," said the lion, "but the Lord of His servants set a ladder before our feet

930 Step by step must we climb towards the roof to be a necessitarian here is (to indulge in) foolish hopes

You have feet why do you make yourself out to be lame? you have hands why do you conceal the fingers (whereby you grasp)

When the master put a spade in the slave's hand his object was made known to him (the slave) without (a word falling from his) tongue

Hand and spade alike are His (God's) implicit signs, (our powers of) thinking upon the end are His explicit declarations

When you take His signs to heart, you will devote your life to fulfilling that indication (of His will)

935 He will give you many hints (for the understanding) of mysteries, He will remove the burden from you and give you (spiritual) authority

Do you bear (His burden)? He will cause you to be borne

[1] The words rendered by 'wretchedness' are *kur u kabúd* 'blind and blue'

(aloft) Do you receive (His commands)? He will cause you to be received (into His favour)

If you accept His command, you will become the spokesman (thereof), if you seek union (with Him), thereafter you will become united

Freewill is the endeavour to thank (God) for His beneficence your necessitarianism is the denial of that beneficence

Thanksgiving for the power (of acting freely) increases your power, necessitarianism takes the (Divine) gift (of freewill) out of your hand

Your necessitarianism is (like) sleeping on the road do not sleep! Sleep not, until you see the gate and the threshold!

Beware! do not sleep, O inconsiderate necessitarian, save underneath that fruit-laden tree,

So that every moment the wind may shake the boughs and shower upon the sleeper (spiritual) dessert and provision for the journey

Necessitarianism is to sleep amidst highwaymen how should the untimely bird receive quarter?

And if you turn up your nose at His signs, you deem (yourself) a man, but when you consider (more deeply), you are (only) a woman

This measure of understanding which you possess is lost a head from which the understanding is severed becomes a tail,

Because ingratitude is wickedness and disgrace and brings the ingrate to the bottom of Hell-fire

If you are putting trust in God, put trust (in Him) as regards (your) work sow (the seed), then rely upon the Almighty"

How the beasts once more asserted the superiority of trust in God to exertion

They all lifted up their voices (to dispute) with him, saying, "Those covetous ones who sowed (the seed of) means[1],

Myriads on myriads of men and women—why, then, did they remain deprived of fortune?

From the beginning of the world myriads of generations have opened a hundred mouths, like dragons

Those clever people devised plots (of such power) that the mountain thereby was torn up from its foundation

The Glorious (God) described their plots (when He said) (*though their guile be such*) *that the tops of the mountains might be moved thereby*

(But) except the portion which came to pass (was predestined)

[1] *I.e* had recourse to exertion as a means of attaining to their desire

in eternity, nothing showed its face (accrued to them) from their scheming[1] and doing

They all fell from (failed in) plan and act: the acts and decrees of the Maker remained.

955 O illustrious one, do not regard work as aught but a name! O cunning one, think not that exertion is aught but a vain fancy!"

How 'Azrá'íl (Azrael) looked at a certain man, and how that man fled to the palace of Solomon; and setting forth the superiority of trust in God to exertion and the uselessness of the latter.

One forenoon a freeborn (noble) man arrived and ran into Solomon's hall of justice,

His countenance pale with anguish and both lips blue. Then Solomon said, "Good sir, what is the matter?"

He replied, "Azrael cast on me such a look, so full of wrath and hate."

"Come," said the king, "what (boon) do you desire now? Ask (it)!" "O protector of my life," said he, "command the wind

960 To bear me from here to India. Maybe, when thy slave is come thither he will save his life."

Lo, the people are fleeing from poverty: hence are they a mouthful for (a prey to) covetousness and expectation.

The fear of poverty is like that (man's) terror: know thou that covetousness and striving are (like) India (in this tale).

He (Solomon) commanded the wind to bear him quickly over the water to the uttermost part of India.

Next day, at the time of conference and meeting, Solomon said to Azrael:

965 "Didst thou look with anger on that Moslem in order that he might wander (as an exile) far from his home?"

Azrael said, "When did I look (on him) angrily? I saw him as I passed by, (and looked at him) in astonishment,

For God had commanded me, saying, 'Hark, to-day do thou take his spirit in India.'

From wonder I said (to myself), '(Even) if he has a hundred wings, 'tis a far journey for him to be in India (to-day).'"

In like manner judge of all the affairs of this world and open your eye and see!

970 From whom shall we flee? From ourselves? Oh, absurdity! From whom shall we take (ourselves) away? From God? Oh, crime!

[1] Reading سگال for شکار.

How the lion again declared exertion to be superior to trust in God and expounded the advantages of exertion

"Yes," said the lion, "but at the same time consider the exertions of the prophets and the true believers

God, exalted is He, prospered their exertion and what they suffered of oppression and heat and cold

Their plans were excellent in all circumstances everything done by a goodly man is goodly

Their snares caught the Heavenly bird, all their deficiencies turned to increment "

O master, exert thyself so long as thou canst in (following) 975
the way of the prophets and saints!

Endeavour is not a struggle with Destiny, because Destiny itself has laid this (endeavour) upon us

I am an infidel if any one has suffered loss a single moment (while walking) in the way of faith and obedience

Your head is not broken do not bandage this head Exert yourself (in doing good works) for a day or two (*i e* during this brief life), and laugh unto everlasting!

An evil resort sought he that sought this world, a good state sought he that sought the world to come

Plots for gaining (the things of) this world are worthless, 980
(but) plots for renouncing this world are inspired (by God)

The (right) plot is that he (the prisoner) digs a hole in his prison (in order to escape), if he blocks up the hole, that is a foolish plot

This world is the prison, and we are the prisoners dig a hole in the prison and let yourself out!

What is this world? To be forgetful of God, it is not merchandise and silver and weighing-scales and women

As regards the wealth that you carry for religion's sake, "How good is righteous wealth (for the righteous man)!" as the Prophet recited

Water in the boat is the ruin of the boat, (but) water under- 985
neath the boat is a support

Since he cast out from his heart (the desire for) wealth and possessions, on that account Solomon did not call himself (by any name) but "poor "

The stoppered jar, (though) in rough water, floated on the water because of its wind-filled (empty) heart

When the wind of poverty is within (any one), he rests at peace on the surface of the water of the world,

Although the whole of this world is his kingdom, in the eye of his heart the kingdom is nothing

Therefore stopper and seal the mouth of your heart, and fill 990
it from the inward ventilator

Exertion is a reality, and medicine and disease are realities the sceptic in his denial of exertion practised (and thereby affirmed) exertion

How the superiority of exertion to trust in God was established

The lion gave many proofs in this style, so that those necessitarians became tired of answering (him)

Fox and deer and hare and jackal abandoned (the doctrine of) necessity and (ceased from) disputation

They made covenants with the furious lion, (ensuring) that he should incur no loss in this bargain,

995 (That) the daily ration should come to him without trouble, and that he should not need to make a further demand

Day by day the one on whom the lot fell would run to the lion as (swiftly as) a cheetah

When this cup (of death) came round to the hare, the hare cried out, "Why, how long (are we to endure this) injustice?"

How the beasts of chase blamed the hare for his delay in going to the lion

The company (of beasts) said to him "All this time we have sacrificed our lives in troth and loyalty

Do not thou seek to give us a bad name, O rebellious one! Lest the lion be aggrieved, go, go! Quick! Quick!"

How the hare answered the beasts

1000 "O friends," said he, "grant me a respite, that by my cunning ye may escape from calamity,

That by my cunning your lives may be saved and this (safety) remain as a heritage to your children "

Every prophet amidst the peoples used to call them after this manner to a place of deliverance,

For he had seen from Heaven the way of escape, (though) in (their) sight he was contracted (despicable) like the pupil of the eye

Men regarded him as small like the pupil none attained to (understanding of) the (real) greatness (worth) of the pupil

How the beasts objected to the proposal of the hare

1005 The company (of beasts) said to him "O donkey, listen (to us)! Keep thyself within the measure of a hare!

Eh, what brag is this (an idea) which thy betters never brought into their minds?

Thou art self-conceited, or Destiny is pursuing us, else, how is this speech suitable to one like thee?"

How the hare again answered the beasts

He said "O friends, God gave me inspiration to a weakling there came a strong judgement (wise counsel)"

That which God taught to the bees is not (belonging) to the lion and the wild ass

It (the bee) makes houses of juicy *halwá* (sweetmeat) God opened to it the door of that knowledge,

That which God taught to the silkworm—does any elephant know such a device?

Adam, created of earth, learned knowledge from God (his) knowledge shot beams up to the Seventh Heaven

He (Adam) broke the name and fame (pride) of the angels, to the confusion of that one who is in doubt concerning God

He (God) made the ascetic of so many thousand years (Iblis) a muzzle for that young calf (Adam),

That he (Adam) might not be able to drink the milk of knowledge of religion, and that he might not roam around that lofty castle

The sciences of the followers of (external) sense became a muzzle, so that he (the believer in sense-perception) might not receive milk from that sublime knowledge

(But) into the blood-drop (core) of the heart there fell a jewel which He (God) gave not to the seas and skies

How long (this regard for) form? After all, O form-worshipper, has thy reality-lacking soul not (yet) escaped from form?

If a human being were a man in virtue of form, Ahmad (Mohammed) and Bu Jahl would be just the same

The painting on the wall is like Adam see from the (pictured) form what thing in it is wanting

The spirit is wanting in that resplendent form go, seek that jewel rarely found!

The heads of all the lions in the world were laid low when They (God) gave a hand to (bestowed favour on) the dog of the Companions (of the Cave)

What loss does it suffer from that abhorred shape, inasmuch as its spirit was plunged in the ocean of light?

'Tis not in pens to describe (the outward) form[1] (what is written) in letters is (qualities like) "learned" and "just",

(And qualities like) "learned" and "just" are only the spiritual essence which thou wilt not find in (any) place or in front or behind

The sun of the spirit strikes (with its beams) on the body from the quarter where (the relation of) place does not exist it (that sun) is not contained in the sky

[1] *I.e* 'it is not the external features of a man that are praised in complimentary letters addressed to him'

An account of the knowledge of the hare and an explanation of the excellence and advantages of knowledge

This topic hath no end Give heed! Listen to the story of the hare

Sell your asinine (corporeal) ear and buy another ear, for the asinine ear will not apprehend this discourse

Go, behold the foxy tricks played by the hare, behold how the hare made a plot to catch the lion

1030 Knowledge is the seal of the kingdom of Solomon the whole world is form, and knowledge is the spirit

Because of this virtue, the creatures of the seas and those of mountain and plain are helpless before man

Of him the pard and lion are afraid, like the mouse, from him the crocodile of the great river is in pallor and agitation

From him peri and demon took to the shores (sought refuge) each took abode in some hiding-place

Man hath many a secret enemy the cautious man is a wise one

1035 (There are) hidden creatures, evil and good at every instant their blows are striking on the heart

If you go into the river to wash yourself, a thorn in the water inflicts a hurt upon you

Although the thorn is hidden low in the water, you know it is there, since it is pricking you

The pricks of (angelic) inspirations and (satanic) temptations are from thousands of beings, not (only) from one

Wait (patiently) for your (bodily) senses to be transmuted, so that you may see them (the hidden beings), and the difficulty may be solved

1040 So that (you may see) whose words you have rejected and whom you have made your captain

How the beasts requested the hare to tell the secret of his thought

Afterwards they said, "O nimble hare, communicate what is in thy apprehension

O thou who hast grappled with a lion, declare the plan which thou hast thought of

Counsel gives perception and understanding the mind is helped by (other) minds

The Prophet said, 'O adviser, take counsel (with the trustworthy) for he whose counsel is sought is trusted'"

How the hare withheld the secret from them

He said, "One ought not to say forth every secret sometimes the even number turns out to be odd, and sometimes the odd number to be even " 1045

If from guilelessness you breathe words to a mirror, the mirror at once becomes dim to us

Do not move your lip in explanation of these three things, (namely) concerning your departure and your gold and your religion,

For to these three there is many an adversary and foe standing in wait for you when he knows (about any of them)

And if you tell (only) one or two (a few people) farewell (to your secret) every secret that goes beyond the twain (who share it) is published abroad

If you tie two or three birds together they will remain on the ground, imprisoned by grief, 1050

(But in truth) they hold a consultation well-disguised and mingled, in its (apparent) significance, with that which casts error (into the mind of any one who observes them)

(Similarly) the Prophet used to take counsel, (speaking) cryptically, and they (his companions) would answer him and (would be) without knowledge (of his real meaning)

He would speak his opinion in a covert parable[1], in order that the adversary might not know foot from head

He (the Prophet) would receive his answer from him (the adversary), while the other would not catch the smell (drift) of his question

The story of the hare's stratagem

He delayed awhile in going, then he went before the lion who rends (his prey) with claws 1055

Because he tarried late in going, the lion was tearing up the earth and roaring

"I said," cried the lion, "that the promise of those vile ones would be vain—vain and frail and unfulfilled

Their palaver has duped me[2] how long will this Time deceive me, how long?"

The prince that hath no strength in his beard[3] is left sorely in the lurch when by reason of his folly he looks neither backwards nor forwards

The road is smooth, and under it are pitfalls amidst the names there is a dearth of meaning 1060

[1] Literally "wrapped in a parable "
[2] Literally "has thrown me from the ass '
[3] *I.e* foolish

Words and names are like pitfalls the sweet (flattering) word is the sand for (the sand that sucks up) the water of our life

The one sand whence water gushes is seldom to be found go, seek it

He that searches after wisdom becomes a fountain of wisdom, he becomes independent of acquisition and (ways and) means

The guarding tablet[1] becomes a Guarded Tablet[2], his understanding becomes enriched by the Spirit

1065 When a man's understanding has been his teacher, after this the understanding becomes his pupil

The understanding says, like Gabriel, "O Ahmad (Mohammed), if I take one (more) step, it will burn me,

Do thou leave me, henceforth advance (alone) this is my limit, O sultan of the soul!"

Whoever, through heedlessness, remains without thanksgiving and patience (self-control), knows (no resource) but this, that he should follow in the heels of necessity (*jabr*)

Any one who pleads necessity (as an excuse) feigns himself to be ill, with the result that the (feigned) illness brings him to the grave

1070 The Prophet said, "Illness (assumed) in jest brings (real) disease, so that he (the jester) dies like a lamp"

What is (the meaning of) *jabr*? To bind up a broken (limb) or tie a severed vein

Inasmuch as you have not broken your foot in this path, whom are you mocking? Why have you bandaged your foot?

But as for him who broke his foot in the path of exertion, Buráq came up to him, and he mounted (and rode)

He was a bearer of the (true) religion, and he became one who is borne, he was an accepter of the (Divine) command, and he became accepted

1075 Until now, he was receiving commands from the King, henceforth he delivers the (King's) commands to the people

Until now, the stars were influencing him, henceforth he is the ruler of the stars

If (on this account) perplexity arise in thy sight (mind), then thou wilt have doubts concerning *The moon was cloven asunder*

Refresh thy faith, (but) not with talk of the tongue, O thou who hast secretly refreshed thy (evil) desire

So long as desire is fresh, faith is not fresh, for 'tis this desire that locks (against thee) that gate

1080 Thou hast interpreted (and altered the meaning of) the virgin (uncorrupted) Word interpret (alter) thyself, not the (Divine) Book

Thou interpretest the Qur'án according to thy desire by thee the sublime meaning is degraded and perverted

[1] His heart which guards and preserves the lessons of wisdom

[2] *I.e.* an inviolable source of Divine knowledge

The baseness of the foul interpretation given by the fly

The fly was lifting up his head, like a pilot, on a blade of straw and (a pool of) ass's urine

"I have called (them) sea and ship," said he, "I have been pondering over that (interpretation) for a long while

Look! here is this sea and this ship, and I am the pilot and skilled (in navigation) and judicious"

He was propelling the raft on the "sea" that (small) quantity appeared to him illimitable

That urine was boundless in relation to him where was the vision that should see it truly?

His world extends (just) as far as his sight reaches, his eye is so big, his "sea" is big in the same proportion

So with the false interpreter (of the Qur'án) like the fly, his imagination is (foul as) ass's urine and his conception (worthless as) a straw

If the fly leave off interpreting by (following his own) opinion, Fortune will turn that fly into a *humay*

One who possesses this (Divine) indication (of the true meaning) is not a fly his spirit is not analogous to his (outward) form

How the lion roared wrathfully because the hare was late in coming

As (for example) the hare who struck against the lion how was his spirit analogous to his stature?

The lion from fury and rage was saying, "By means of my ear the enemy has bound up my eye[1]

The tricks of the necessitarians have bound me (in captivity), their wooden sword has wounded my body

After this I will not hearken to their palaver all that is (only meant to deceive, like) the cry of demons and ghouls

O my heart, tear them to pieces, do not lag, rend their skins, for they have naught but skin"

What is skin? Specious words, like ripples on water which have no continuance

Know that these words are as the skin (rind), and the meaning is (as) the kernel, these words are as the form, and the meaning is like the spirit

The skin hides the defect of the bad kernel, it (also) hides jealously the secrets of the good kernel

When the pen is of wind and the scroll of water, whatever you write perishes speedily,

It is written on water if you seek constancy from it, you will return biting your hands (in disappointment)

[1] *I.e.* "I have let myself be blinded by listening to the beasts"

The wind in men is vanity and desire, when you have abandoned vanity, (then) is (the time for) the message from Him (God)

Sweet are the messages of the Maker, for it (that message) from head to foot (from first to last) is enduring

The *khuṭbas*[1] for kings change (and pass), and their empire, (all will pass) except the empire and *khuṭbas* (insignia) of the prophets,

Because the pomp of kings is from (earthly) vanity, (while) the glorious privilege of the prophets is from (Divine) Majesty

The names of kings are removed from the dirhems, (but) the name of Ahmad (Mohammed) is stamped on them for ever

The name of Ahmad is the name of all the prophets when the hundred comes (is counted), ninety is with us as well[2]

Further setting forth the stratagem of the hare

The hare made much delay in going, he rehearsed to himself the tricks (which he was about to play)

After long delay he came on (took) the road, that he might say one or two secrets into the ear of the lion

Think, what worlds are in commerce with Reason! How wide is this ocean of Reason!

In this sweet ocean our forms are moving fast, like cups on the surface of water

Until they become full, (they float) like bowls on the top of the sea, (but) when the bowl is filled it sinks therein

Reason is hidden, and (only) a world (of phenomena) is visible our forms are the waves or a spray of it (of that hidden ocean)

Whatsoever (thing) the form makes (uses as) a means of approach to It (to Reason), by that (same) means the ocean (of Reason) casts it (the form) far away

So long as the heart does not see the Giver of (its) conscience, so long as the arrow does not see the far-shooting Archer[3],

He (who is thus blind) thinks his horse is lost, though (all the while) he is obstinately speeding his horse on the road

That fine fellow thinks his horse is lost, while his horse is sweeping him onward like the wind

In lamentation and inquiry that scatterbrain (runs) from door to door in every direction, asking and searching

"Where and who is he that stole my horse?" What is this (animal) under thy thigh, O master?

"Yes this is the horse, but where is the horse?" O dexterous rider in search of thy horse, come to thyself!

[1] The *khuṭba* is a prayer for the Prophet and the reigning sovereign which forms part of the public worship of Moslems

[2] Mohammed being the last of the prophets includes them all as the final sum includes all the units of which it is composed

[3] Cf v 114,

The Spirit is lost (to view) because of its being so manifest 1120
and near: how, having thy belly full of water, art thou dry-lipped like a jar?

How wilt thou see red and green and russet, unless before (seeing) these three (colours) thou see the light?

But since thy mind was lost (absorbed) in (perception of) the colour, those colours became to thee a veil from (debarred thee from contemplating) the light.

Inasmuch as at night those colours were hidden, thou sawest that thy vision of the colour was (derived) from the light.

There is no vision of colour without the external light: even so it is with the colour of inward phantasy.

This outward (light) is (derived) from the sun and from 1125
Suhá[1], while the inward (light) is from the reflexion of the beams of (Divine) Glory.

The light which gives light to the eye is in truth the light of the heart: the light of the eye is produced by the light of hearts.

Again, the light which gives light to the heart is the Light of God, which is pure and separate from the light of intellect and sense.

At night there was no light: thou didst not see the colour; then it (the light) was made manifest by the opposite of light (by darkness).

(First) comes the seeing of light, then the seeing of colour, and this thou knowest immediately by the opposite of light (darkness).

God created pain and sorrow for the purpose that happiness 1130
might be made manifest by means of this opposite.

Hidden things, then, are manifested by means of their opposite; since God hath no opposite, He is hidden;

For the sight fell (first) on the light, then on the colour: opposite is made manifest by opposite, like Greeks and Ethiopians.

Therefore thou knewest light by its opposite: opposite reveals opposite in (the process of) coming forth.

The Light of God hath no opposite in (all) existence, that by means of that opposite it should be possible to make Him manifest.

Necessarily (therefore) our eyes do not perceive Him, though 1135
He perceives (us): see this (fact) from (the case of) Moses and the mountain (Sinai).

Know that form springs from spirit (reality) as the lion from the jungle, or as voice and speech from thought.

This speech and voice arose from thought; thou knowest not where is the sea of thought;

But since thou hast seen that the waves of speech are fair, thou knowest that their sea also is noble.

[1] A small star.

When the waves of thought sped on from (the sea of) Wisdom, it (Wisdom) made (for them) the form of speech and voice

The form was born of the Word and died again, the wave drew itself back into the sea

The form came forth from Formlessness and went back (thither), for *Verily unto Him are we returning*

Every instant, then, thou art dying and returning Muṣṭafa declared that this world is (but) a moment

Our thought is an arrow (shot) from Him (*Hu*) into the air (*hawá*) how should it stay in the air? It comes (back) to God

Every moment the world is renewed, and we are unaware of its being renewed whilst it remains (the same in appearance)

Life is ever arriving anew, like the stream, though in the body it has the semblance of continuity

From its swiftness it appears continuous, like the spark which thou whirlest rapidly with thy hand

If thou whirl a firebrand with dexterity, it appears to the sight as a very long (line of) fire

The swift motion produced by the action of God presents this length of duration (Time) as (a phenomenon arising) from the rapidity of Divine action

Even if the seeker of this mystery is an exceedingly learned man, (say to him), "Lo, Husámu'ddín, who is a sublime book (where you will find the mystery revealed)"

The hare's coming to the lion and the lion's anger with him

The lion, incensed and wrathful and frantic, saw the hare coming from afar,

Running undismayed and confidently, looking angry and fierce and fell and sour,

For by coming humbly (he thought) suspicion would be (excited), while by boldness every cause of doubt would be removed

When he came further on, near to the "shoe-row[1]," the lion shouted—"Ha, villain!

I who have torn oxen limb from limb, I who have rubbed the ear of (chastised and vanquished) the ferocious elephant—

Who (what) is a half-witted (feeble) hare, that he should thus throw on the ground (disregard) my behest?"

Abandon the hare's slumber and heedlessness! Give ear, O donkey, to the roaring of this lion![2]

[1] The place near the door where visitors take off their shoes before advancing to the dais at the upper end of the room

[2] This verse is an admonition addressed to the reader

The hare's apology

"Mercy!" cried the hare, "I have an excuse, if thy Lordship's pardon come to my aid[1]."

"What excuse?" said he. "Oh, the shortsightedness of fools! Is this the time for them to come into the presence of kings?

Thou art an untimely bird: thy head must be cut off. One ought not to hear the excuse of a fool.

The fool's excuse is worse than his crime; the excuse of the ignorant is the poison that kills wisdom.

Thy excuse, O hare, is devoid of wisdom: what hare[2] am I that thou shouldst put it in my ear?"

"O king," he replied, "account a worthless one to be worthy: hearken to the excuse of one who has suffered oppression.

In particular, as an alms (thank-offering) for thy high estate, do not drive out of thy way one whose way is lost.

The ocean, which gives some water to every stream, lays on its head and face (surface) every piece of rubbish.

By this bounty the sea will not become less: the sea is neither increased nor diminished by its bounty."

The lion said, "I will bestow bounty in its (proper) place; I will cut every one's clothes according to his stature."

"Listen," cried the hare, "if I am not a fit object for (thy) grace, I lay my head before the dragon of (thy) violence[3].

At breakfast-time I set out on the way; I came towards the king with my comrade.

That party (of beasts) had appointed, for thy sake, another hare to go along with me as consort and companion.

On the road a lion attacked thy humble slave, attacked both the companions in travel who were coming (to thee).

I said to him, 'We are the slaves of the King of kings, the lowly fellow-servants of that (exalted) court.'

He said, 'The King of kings! Who is he? Be ashamed! Do not make mention of every base loon in my presence.

Both thee and thy king I will tear to pieces, if thou and thy friend turn back from my door.'

I said to him, 'Let me behold once more the face of the king and bear the news of thee (to him).'

He said, 'Place thy comrade with me (in my keeping) as a pledge; otherwise, thou art a sacrifice (thy life is forfeit) according to my law.'

We entreated him much: it was no use. He seized my friend and left me to go alone.

[1] Literally, 'give me a (helping) hand,' i.e. 'if thou wilt pardon my presumption and permit me to excuse myself I will do so.'

[2] I.e. "ass." The Persian word for hare is *khargush*—ass-eared.

[3] I.e. "I surrender myself to thy vengeance."

My friend, from his plumpness, made three of me both in comeliness and beauty and (size of) body

Henceforth this road is barred by that lion the thread of our covenants is broken

Cut off (abandon) hope of the allowance henceforth, I am telling thee the truth, and truth is bitter

If thou want the allowance, clear the way! hey, come on and repel that irreverent one!"

How the lion answered the hare and set off with him

"Come on in God's name," said he, "let me see where he is! Go thou in front, if thou art speaking truth,

That I may give him and a hundred like him the punishment they deserve, or if this is a lie, that I may give thy deserts to thee"

The hare set out on the way, (going) in front like a guide, that he might lead him towards his snare,

Towards the well which he had designated he had made the deep well a snare for his (the lion's) life

(Thus) were these twain going till (they arrived) near the well Look you, (this was) a hare (deceitful) as a (pool of) water (hidden) under straw

The water bears a blade of straw (down) to the plain how, I wonder, will the straw bear away a mountain?

The snare of his (the hare's) guile was a noose for the lion a marvellous hare (he), who was carrying off a lion (as his prey)!

A Moses draws Pharaoh, with his army and mighty host, into the river Nile

A single gnat with half a wing cleaves intrepidly the suture of Nimrod's skull

Behold the state of him who hearkened to the words of his enemy, and the retribution of him who became the friend of the envious one –

The state of a Pharaoh who hearkened to Haman, and the state of a Nimrod who hearkened to Satan

Albeit the enemy speak to thee in friendly wise, know (his words to be) the snare, though he speak to thee of the grain (bait)

If he give thee some candy, regard it as poison, if he do a kindness to thy body, regard it as cruelty

When the (Divine) destiny comes to pass, you see naught but the skin (outward appearance) you do not distinguish enemies from friends

Since the case is thus, begin humble supplication, set about lamenting and glorifying (God) and fasting

Lament continually, crying, "O Thou who well knowest the

hidden things, do not crush us beneath the stone of evil contrivance

O Creator of the lion, if we have wrought currishness, do not set the lion (to spring) on us from this covert

Do not give to sweet water the form of fire, do not put upon fire the form of water

When Thou makest (us) drunken with the wine of Thy wrath, Thou givest to things non-existent the form of existence "

What is (this) drunkenness? That which binds (prevents) 1200
the eye from (true) eyesight, so that a (common) stone appears a jewel, and wool (*pashm*) a jasper (*yashm*)

What is (this) drunkenness? The perversion of the senses, the change of tamarisk-wood into sandal-wood in the (perverted) sight

Story of the hoopoe and Solomon, showing that when the Divine destiny comes to pass, clear eyes are sealed

When the tent-pavilion was pitched for Solomon, the birds came before him to pay obeisance

They found (him) speaking the same tongue (as themselves) and familiar with them one by one they sped with (eager) soul into his presence

All the birds, having ceased from twittering, (in converse) with Solomon became more distinct (spoke more articulately) than your own brother

To speak the same tongue is a kinship and affinity a man, 1205
(when he is) with those in whom he cannot confide, is like a prisoner in chains

Oh, many are the Indians and Turks that speak the same tongue, oh, many the pair of Turks that are as strangers (to each other)

Therefore the tongue of mutual understanding is different indeed to be one in heart is better than to be one in tongue

Without speech and without sign or scroll, hundreds of thousands of interpreters arise from the heart

The birds, all and each, their secrets of skill and knowledge and practice

Were revealing, one by one, to Solomon, and were praising 1210
themselves by way of submitting a request (for his consideration),

Not from pride and self-conceit, (but) in order that he might give them access to him[1]

When a captive wants a lord (to buy him as a slave), he offers a preface (summary account) of his talent,

[1] *I e* grant them the privilege of being freely admitted to his presence

(But) when he is ashamed (disgusted) at his buying him, he makes himself out to be sick and palsied and deaf and lame

The turn came for the hoopoe and his craft and the explanation of his skill and thoughtfulness

1215 "O king," said he, "I will declare (only) one talent, which is an inferior one, 'tis better to speak briefly"

"Tell on," said Solomon, "let me hear what talent that is"

The hoopoe said, "At the time when I am at the zenith,

I gaze from the zenith with the eye of certainty and I see the water at the bottom of the earth,

So that (I know) where it is and what is its depth, what its colour is, whence it gushes forth—from clay or from rock

O Solomon, for the sake of thine army's camping place keep this wise one (beside thee) on thy expeditions"

1220 Then said Solomon, "O good companion in waterless far-stretching wastes!"

How the crow impugned the claim of the hoopoe

When the crow heard (this), from envy he came and said to Solomon, "He has spoken false and ill

It is not respectful to speak in the king's presence, in particular (to utter) lying and absurd self-praise

If he had always had this (keen) sight, how would not he have seen the snare beneath a handful of earth?

How would he have been caught in the snare? How would he have gone into the cage willy-nilly?"

1225 Then Solomon said "O hoopoe, is it right that these dregs have risen from thee at the first cup?

O thou who hast drunk buttermilk, how dost thou pretend intoxication and brag in my presence and tell lies besides?"

The hoopoe's answer to the attack of the crow

He said, "O king, for God's sake do not listen to the enemy's words against me, bare beggar as I am

If this which I claim is not (true), I lay my head (before thee) sever this neck of mine

The crow, who disbelieves in the (absolute) authority of the Divine destiny, is an infidel, though he have thousands of wits

1230 Whilst there is in you a single *k* (derived) from the *kafiran* (infidels), you are the seat of stench and lust, velut rima femoris

I see the snare (when I am) in the air, if the Divine destiny do not muffle the eye of my intelligence

When the Divine destiny comes, wisdom goes to sleep, the moon becomes black, the sun is stopped (from shining)

How is this disposal (of things) by the Divine destiny (to be called) singular?[1] Know that it is by the Divine destiny that he (the infidel) disbelieves in the Divine destiny

The story of Adam, on whom be peace, and how the Divine destiny sealed up his sight so that he failed to observe the plain meaning of the prohibition and to refrain from interpreting it

The father of mankind, who is the lord of *He (God) taught (Adam) the Names*, hath hundreds of thousands of sciences in every vein

To his soul accrued (knowledge of) the name of every thing, even as that thing exists (in its real nature) unto the end (of the world)

No title that he gave became changed that one whom he called 'brisk' did not become 'lazy'

Whoso is (to be) a believer at the last, he saw at the first, whoso is (to be) an infidel at the last, to him it became manifest

Do thou hear the name of every thing from the knower hear the inmost meaning of the mystery of *He taught the Names*

With us, the name of every thing is its outward (appearance), with the Creator, the name of every thing is its inward (reality)

In the eyes of Moses the name of his rod was 'staff', in the eyes of the Creator its name was 'dragon'

Here the name of 'Umar was 'idolater,' but in *Alast*[2] his name was 'believer'

That of which the name, with us, was 'seed' was, in the sight of God, thou who art at this moment beside me

This 'seed' was a form (idea) in non-existence (potentiality), existent with God, neither more nor less (than the form in which it appeared externally)

In brief, that which is our end is really our name with God

He bestows on a man a name according to his final state, not according to that (state) to which He gives the name of 'a loan'

Inasmuch as the eye of Adam saw by means of the Pure Light, the soul and inmost sense of the names became evident to him

Since the angels perceived in him the rays of God, they fell in worship and hastened to do homage

The Adam like this whose name I am celebrating, if I praise (him) till the Resurrection, I fall short (of what is due)

All this he knew, (yet) when the Divine destiny came, he was at fault in the knowledge of a single prohibition,

Wondering whether the prohibition was for the purpose of making unlawful (the thing prohibited), or whether it admitted of an interpretation and was a cause of perplexity

[1] *I e* "How is it strange that I should have been deceived?"
[2] *I.e* in the world of pre-existence

When (the view that it admitted of) interpretation prevailed in his mind, his nature hastened in bewilderment towards the wheat[1]

When the thorn went into the foot of the gardener (Adam), the thief (Satan) found an opportunity and quickly carried off the goods

As soon as he escaped from bewilderment, he returned into the (right) road, (then) he saw that the thief had carried off the wares from the shop

He cried, '*O Lord, we have done wrong*,' and 'Alas,' that is to say, 'darkness came and the way was lost '

1255 This Divine destiny is a cloud that covers the sun thereby lions and dragons become as mice

If I (the hoopoe) do not see a snare in the hour of Divine ordainment, 'tis not I alone who am ignorant in the course of Divine ordainment "

Oh, happy he that clave to righteousness, he (that) let (his own) strength go and took to supplication!

If the Divine destiny shrouds thee in black like night, yet the Divine destiny will take thy hand (and guide thee) at the last

If the Divine destiny a hundred times attempts thy life, yet the Divine destiny gives thee life and heals thee

1260 This Divine destiny, if a hundred times it waylays thee, (nevertheless) pitches thy tent on the top of Heaven

Know that this is from the lovingkindness (of God), that He terrifies thee in order that He may establish thee in the kingdom of security

This subject hath no end 'Tis late[2] Hearken (now) to the story of the hare and the lion

How the hare drew back from the lion when he approached the well

When the lion came near the well, he saw that the hare lagged on the way and stepped back

He said, ' Why have you stepped back? Do not step back, come on!"

1265 The hare said, "Where is my (power to move a) foot? for (both) hand and foot are gone My soul trembles and my heart (courage) has fled

Seest thou not the colour of my face (pale) as gold? My colour indeed is giving knowledge of my inward state

Since God has called the (external) sign (aspect) informative, the eye of the gnostic has remained turned towards the sign

Colour and scent are significant like a bell the neigh of a horse makes (one) acquainted with the horse

The sound made by any thing conveys knowledge of it, so

[1] *I e* the forbidden fruit [2] *I e* 'there has been a long digression "

that you may distinguish the bray of an ass from the creak of a door

Touching the discrimination of persons (one from another), the Prophet said, 'A man is hidden when his tongue is folded up'

The colour of the face indicates the state of the heart have pity on me, implant love of me in thy heart

A red complexion has the sound of (declares and expresses) thankfulness (satisfaction), the sound (signification) of a pale complexion is patience and unthankfulness

There has come upon me that which took away hand and foot, took away colour of face and strength and (every outward) mark,

That which shatters every thing it comes upon, tears up every tree from root and bottom,

There has come upon me that by which man and animal, mineral and plant have been checkmated

These indeed are (only) parts, (but) wholes (too) are by him (Doom) made yellow in hue and corrupt in odour,

So that the world is now patient, now thankful, the garden now puts on a robe (of verdure) and again is bare

The sun, which rises fire-coloured, at another hour sinks headlong

Stars shining in the four quarters (of the sky) are, from time to time, afflicted with (consumed by) burning

The moon, which excels the stars in beauty, becomes like a phantom from the malady of a hectic fever

This earth, quiet and controlled, is thrown by earthquakes into feverish tremors

Oh, from this inherited woe many a mountain in the world has become tiny fragments and (grains of) sand

This air is conjoined with the (vital) spirit, (but) when the Divine destiny comes, it turns foul and stinking

The sweet water that was a sister (congenial) to the spirit, (after standing) in a pool, became yellow and bitter and turbid

The fire that has wind in its moustache[1]—a single puff of wind calls death upon it

The state of the sea (is such that) from its agitation and commotion (you may) perceive the changes of its mind

The whirling heaven, which is (ever engaged) in seeking and searching—its state is like the state of its children,

Now nadir, now middle, now zenith therein are host on host of stars fortunate and unlucky

From thyself, O part made up of wholes, apprehend the state of every simple (uncompounded) thing

Inasmuch as wholes suffer grief and pain, how should their part not be pale-faced (sick and subject to decay)?

[1] *I.e* "that is puffed up with pride"

Especially a part which is composed of contraries—of water and earth and fire and air

It is no wonder that the sheep recoiled from the wolf, the wonder is that this sheep set its heart on (became friendly with) the wolf

Life is the peace (harmony) of contraries, death is the fact that war arose between them

The grace of God has given amity to this lion and wild-ass—these two far distant contraries

Since the world is sick and a prisoner, what wonder if the sick one is passing away?"

From this point of view he (the hare) recited counsels to the lion "I have lagged behind," said he, "because of these bonds"

How the lion asked the reason of the hare's drawing back

The lion said to him, "Amongst (all) the causes of your malady tell (me) the special cause, for this is my object"

"That lion," he said, "lives in this well within this fortress he is safe from harms"

Every one who is wise chose the bottom of the well (to live in), because spiritual joys are (to be attained only) in solitude

The darkness of the well is better than the dark shades of the world he that followed at the heels of the world never saved his head

"Come on," said the lion, "my blow subdues him see thou whether that lion is in the well at present"

The hare answered, "I am consumed with (dread of) that fieriness (wrath) perhaps thou wilt take me beside thee,

That with thy support, O mine of generosity, I may open my eyes and look into the well"

How the lion looked into the well and saw the reflexion of himself and the hare in the water

When the lion took him to his side under the lion's protection he began to run towards the well

As soon as they looked at the water in the well, there shone forth in the water the light (reflected) from the lion and him (the hare)

The lion saw his own reflexion from the water shone the image of a lion with a plump hare at his side

When he beheld his adversary in the water, he left him (the hare) and sprang into the well

He fell into the well which he had dug, because his iniquity was coming (back) on his own head

The iniquity of evil-doers became (for them) a dark well so have said all the wise

The more iniquitous one is, the more frightful is his well (Divine) Justice has ordained worse (punishment) for worse (sin) 1310

O you who from iniquity are digging a well (for others), you are making a snare for yourself

Do not weave (a cocoon) round yourself, like the silkworm You are digging a well for yourself (to fall in) dig with moderation (not too deep)

Deem not the weak to be without a champion recite from the Qur'án (the words), *When the help of God shall come*

If you are an elephant and your foe fled from you, lo, the retribution came upon you, *birds in flocks*

If any poor man on the earth beg for mercy, a loud tumult 1315
falls on (arises among) the Host of Heaven

If you bite him with your teeth and make him bleed, toothache will attack you—how will you do (then)?

The lion saw himself in the well, and in his fury he did not know himself at that moment from the enemy

He regarded his own reflexion as his enemy necessarily he drew a sword against himself

Oh, many an iniquity that you see in others is your own nature (reflected) in them, O reader!

In them shone forth all that you are in your hypocrisy and 1320
iniquity and insolence

You are that (evil-doer), and you are striking those blows at yourself 'tis yourself you are cursing at that moment

You do not see clearly the evil in yourself, else you would hate yourself with (all) your soul

You are assaulting yourself, O simpleton, like the lion who made a rush at himself

When you reach the bottom of your own nature, then you will know that that vileness was from yourself

At the bottom (of the well) it became manifest to the lion that 1325
he who seemed to him to be another was (really) his own image

Whoever tears out the teeth of a poor wretch is doing what the falsely-seeing lion did

O you who see the bad reflexion on the face of your uncle, it is not your uncle that is bad, it is you do not run away from yourself!

The Faithful are mirrors to one another this saying is related from the Prophet

You held a blue glass before your eye for that reason the world seemed to you to be blue

Unless you are blind, know that this blueness comes from 1330
yourself speak ill of yourself, speak no more ill of any one (else)

If the true believer was not seeing by the Light of God, how did things unseen appear naked (plainly revealed) to the true believer?

Inasmuch as you were seeing by the Fire of God, you did not discern the difference between good and evil

Little by little throw water on the fire, that your fire may become light, O man of sorrow!

Throw Thou, O Lord, the purifying water, that this world-fire may become wholly light

1335 All the water of the sea is under Thy command, water and fire, O Lord, are Thine

If Thou willest, fire becomes sweet water, and if Thou willest not, even water becomes fire

This search (aspiration) in us is also brought into existence by Thee, deliverance from iniquity is Thy gift, O Lord

Without (our) seeking Thou hast given us this search, Thou hast given (us) gifts without number and (without) end

How the hare brought to the beasts of chase the news that the lion had fallen into the well

When the hare was gladdened by deliverance (from the lion), he began to run towards the beasts until (he came to) the desert

1340 Having seen the lion miserably slain in the well, he was skipping joyously all the way to the meadow,

Clapping his hands because he had escaped from the hand of Death, fresh and dancing in the air, like bough and leaf

Bough and leaf were set free from the prison of earth, lifted their heads, and became comrades of the wind,

The leaves, when they had burst (forth from) the bough, made haste to reach the top of the tree,

With the tongue of (*seed that put forth*) *its sprouts* each fruit and tree severally is singing thanks to God,

1345 Saying, "The Bounteous Giver nourished our root until the tree *grew big and stood upright*"

(Even so) the spirits bound in clay, when they escape glad at heart from their (prisons of) clay,

Begin to dance in the air of Divine Love and become flawless like the full moon's orb,

Their bodies dancing, and their souls—nay, do not ask (how their souls fare), and those things from which comes the soul's delight—nay, do not ask (of those things)!

The hare lodged the lion in prison Shame on a lion who was discomfited by a hare!

1350 He is in such a disgrace, and still—this is a wonder—he would fain be addressed by the title of *Fakhr-i Dín*[1]

O thou lion that liest at the bottom of this lonely well, thy hare-like soul (*nafs*) has shed and drunk thy blood,

[1] Pride of the Religion (of Islam)

Thy hare-soul is feeding in the desert, (whilst) thou art (lying) at the bottom of this well of "How?" and "Why?"

That lion-catcher (the hare) ran towards the beasts, crying, "Rejoice, O people, since the announcer of joy is come

Glad news! Glad news, O company of merry-makers! That hell-hound has gone back to Hell

Glad news! Glad news! The enemy of your lives—his teeth have been torn out by the vengeance of his Creator

He who smote many heads with his claws—him too the broom of Death has swept away like rubbish"

How the beasts gathered round the hare and spoke in praise of him

Then all the wild beasts assembled, joyous and laughing gleefully in rapture and excitement

They formed a ring, he (the hare) in the midst like a candle all the animals of the desert bowed (in homage) to him

"Art thou a heavenly angel or a peri? No, thou art the Azrael of fierce lions

Whatever thou art, our souls are offered in sacrifice to thee Thou hast prevailed Health to thy hand and arm!

God turned this water into thy stream Blessing on thy hand and arm!

Explain how thou didst meditate with guile, and how thou didst guilefully wipe out that ruffian

Explain, in order that the tale may be the means of curing (our malady), explain, that it may be a salve for our souls

Explain! for in consequence of the iniquity of that tyrant our souls have myriads of wounds"

"O Sirs," said he, "it was (by) God's aid, else, who in the world is a hare (who am I, that I should have been able to do this)?

He (God) bestowed power on me and gave light to my heart the light in my heart gave strength to hand and foot"

From God come preferments (to high position), from God also come changes (which bring one to low estate)

God in (due) course and turn is ever displaying this (Divine) aid to doubters and seers (alike)

Take heed! Do not exult in a kingdom bestowed in turns (passing from one to another) O thou who art the bondsman of Vicissitude, do not act as though thou wert free!

(But) those for whom is prepared a kingdom beyond Vicissitude, for them the drums (of sovereignty) are beaten beyond the Seven Planets

Beyond Vicissitude are the kings everlasting their spirits are circling with the Cupbearer perpetually

If thou wilt renounce this drinking (of worldly pleasures) for a day or two (for thy brief lifetime), thou wilt dip thy mouth in the drink of Paradise

Commentary on (the Tradition) "We have returned from the lesser Jihad to the greater Jihad"

O kings, we have slain the outward enemy, (but) there remains within (us) a worse enemy than he

To slay this (enemy) is not the work of reason and intelligence the inward lion is not subdued by the hare

1375 This carnal self (*nafs*) is Hell, and Hell is a dragon (the fire of) which is not diminished by oceans (of water)

It would drink up the Seven Seas, and still the blazing of that consumer of all creatures would not become less

Stones and stony-hearted infidels enter it, miserable and shamefaced,

(But) still it is not appeased by all this food, until there comes to it from God this call—

"Art thou filled, art thou filled?" It says, "Not yet, lo, here is the fire, here is the glow, here is the burning!"

1380 It made a mouthful of and swallowed a whole world, its belly crying aloud "*Is there any more?*"

God, from (the realm) where place is not, sets His foot on it then it subsides at (the command) *Be, and it was*

Inasmuch as this self of ours is a part of Hell, and all parts have the nature of the whole,

To God (alone) belongs this foot (power) to kill it who, indeed, but God should draw its bow (vanquish it)?

Only the straight arrow is put on the bow, (but) this bow (of the self) has (its) arrows bent back and crooked

1385 Be straight, like an arrow, and escape from the bow, for without doubt every straight (arrow) will fly from the bow (to its mark)

When I turned back from the outer warfare, I set my face towards the inner warfare

We have returned from the lesser Jihád, we are engaged along with the Prophet in the greater Jihád

I pray God to grant me strength and aid and (the right of) boasting[1], that I may root up with a needle[2] this mountain of Qáf

Deem of small account the lion (champion) who breaks the ranks (of the enemy) the (true) lion is he that breaks (conquers) himself

[1] I e the success which would entitle me to boast of having conquered my 'self'

[2] I e slowly and painfully

How the ambassador of Rúm came to the Commander of the Faithful, 'Umar, may God be well-pleased with him, and witnessed the gifts of grace with which 'Umar, may God be well-pleased with him, was endowed

To 'Umar in Medina there came through the wide desert an 1390
ambassador from the Emperor of Rúm

He said, "O ye attendants, where is the palace of the Caliph, that I may take thither my horse and baggage?"

The folk said to him, "He has no palace 'Umar's (only) palace is an illumined spirit

Though he has a (great) renown from being Commander (of the Faithful), he has (no dwelling except) a hut, like the poor

O brother, how wilt thou behold his palace, when hair has grown in the eye of thy heart?

Purge thy heart's eye of hair and defect, and then hope to 1395
behold his palace

Whoever hath a spirit purged of (sensual) desires will at once behold the Presence and the Holy Porch

When Mohammed was purged of this fire and smoke (of human passions), wheresoever he turned his face, was the Face of Allah

Inasmuch as thou art a friend to the evil suggestions of the malign one (Satan), how wilt thou know (the true meaning of) *There is the Face of Allah*?

Every one in whose breast the gate is opened will behold from every city the sun (shining)

God is manifest amongst others as the moon amidst the stars 1400

Lay two finger-ends on thy two eyes, and wilt thou see aught of the world? Deal justly (confess that thou wilt see nothing)

If thou dost not see this world, (yet) it is not non-existent the fault lies not save in the finger of thy evil self

Come, lift the finger from thine eye, and then behold whatsoever thou wishest

To Noah his people said, 'Where is the Divine recompense?' He said, 'On the other side of *they cover themselves with their garments*

Ye have wrapped your faces and heads in your clothes of 1405
necessity ye have eyes and see not '

Man is eye, and (all) the rest is (worthless) skin the sight of that (eye) is (consists in) seeing the Beloved

When there is not sight of the Beloved, it (the eye) is better blind, the beloved who is not everlasting is better afar (away and out of sight) "

When the ambassador of Rum admitted these fresh (spiritual) words into his hearing (gave ear to them), he became more full of longing

He fixed his eye on seeking 'Umar, he let his baggage and horse be lost

1410 He was going in every direction after that man of (great) accomplishment, inquiring madly for him,

Saying, "Can there be in the world such a man, and he be hid, like the spirit, from the world?"

He sought him, that he might be as a slave to him inevitably the seeker is a finder

An Arab woman of the desert saw that he was a stranger-guest "Look," said she, "there is 'Umar under that palm

There he is under the palm-tree, apart from the people behold the Shadow of God asleep in the shade!"

How the ambassador of Rum found the Commander of the Faithful, 'Umar, may God be well-pleased with him, sleeping under the palm-tree

1415 He came thither and stood afar off, he saw 'Umar and fell a-trembling

An awe came upon the ambassador from that slumbering man, a sweet ecstasy lodged in his soul

Love and awe are contrary to each other he saw these two contraries united in his heart[1]

He said to himself "I have seen (many) kings, I have been great (in esteem) and chosen (for honour) in the presence of sultans

I had no awe or dread of kings, (but) awe of this man has robbed me of my wits

1420 I have gone into a jungle of lions and leopards, and my face did not change colour because of them,

Often where the ranks are arrayed on the field of battle have I become (fierce) as a lion at the time when the affair is grievous (desperate)

Many a heavy blow have I suffered and inflicted, I have been stouter in heart than (all) the others

This man is asleep on the earth, unarmed, (and yet) I am trembling in my seven limbs (my whole body) what is this?

This is awe of God, it is not from created beings, it is not awe of this man who wears the frock of a dervish

1425 Whoever is afraid of God and has chosen fear of God (as his religion), the Jinn and mankind and every one who sees (him) are afraid of him"

Thus meditating, he folded his hands reverently After a while 'Umar sprang up from sleep

[1] Literally, "liver."

How the ambassador of Rum saluted the Commander of the Faithful, may God be well-pleased with him

He did homage to 'Umar and salaamed the Prophet said, "(First) the salaam, then the talk "

Then he ('Umar) said, "To thee (greeting)," called him (to come) forward, reassured him, and bade him sit down by his side

Fear ye not is the hospitality offered to those who fear that is proper (entertainment) for one who is afraid

When any one is afraid, they make him (feel) secure, they 1430
soothe (his) fearful heart

How should you say "Fear not" to one who has no fear? Why give lessons (to him)? He needs no lessons

He ('Umar) made that disturbed mind (be) of good cheer and made his desolate heart (be) flourishing (happy)

Afterwards he addressed to him subtle discourses and (spoke) of the holy attributes of God—how good a Friend is He!—

And of the lovingkindnesses of God to the *Abdal* (saints), in order that he (the ambassador) might know (the meaning of) *maqam* (permanent station) and *hal* (passing state)

The *hal* is like the unveiling of that beauteous bride, while 1435
the *maqam* is the (king's) being alone with the bride

The unveiling is witnessed by the king and by others as well, (but) at the time of being alone (with the bride) there is no one except the mighty king

The bride unveils before commons and nobles (alike), in the bridal chamber the king is (alone) with the bride

There is many a one of the Sufis who enjoys *hal*, (but) he that has attained to *maqam* is rare amongst them

He ('Umar) reminded him of the stages traversed by the soul, and he reminded him of the journeys of the spirit,

And of the Time which has (ever) been void of time, and of 1440
the Station of Holiness which has (ever) been majestical,

And of the atmosphere wherein the Simurgh of the spirit, before this (material life), has flown and experienced (the bounty of Divine) grace[1],

Every single flight thereof (being) greater than the horizons (of this world) and greater than the hope and greed of the longing lover

When 'Umar found the stranger in appearance a friend (in reality), he found (that) his soul (was) seeking (to learn) the (Divine) mysteries

The Shaykh ('Umar) was adept and the disciple (the ambassador) eager the man (rider) was quick (dexterous) and the beast belonged to the royal court (was nobly bred and docile)

[1] Literally, "has seen flight and (Divine) bounty "

1445 That spiritual guide ('Umar) perceived that he (the ambassador) possessed (the capacity for receiving) guidance he sowed the good seed in the good soil

How the ambassador of Rum questioned the Commander of the Faithful, may God be well-pleased with him

The man said to him, "O Commander of the Faithful, how did the spirit come to the earth from above?

How did the infinite bird go into the cage?" He replied, "God recited spells and incantations over the spirit

When He recites spells over the non-existences which have no eye or ear, they begin to stir

Because of His spells the non-existences at that very moment are dancing joyously into existence

1450 When, again, He recited a spell over the existent, at His word the existent marched (back) post-haste into non-existence

He spake into the ear of the rose and made it laughing (blooming), He spake to the stone and made it a cornelian of the mine

He spake to the body a sign (message), so that it became spirit, He spake to the sun, so that it became radiant

Again He puts into its ear a fearful saying, and upon the face of the sun fall a hundred eclipses

Consider what that Speaker chanted into the ear of the cloud, so that it poured tears from its eye, like a waterskin

1455 Consider what God has chanted into the ear of the earth, so that it became regardful and has (ever since) remained silent"

Whosoever in perplexity is sorely troubled, God has spoken the riddle into his ear,

That He may imprison him in two (doubtful) thoughts, (namely), "Shall I do what He told (me) or the contrary thereof?"

From (the decree of) God also, one side obtains the preponderance, and from that (Divine) quarter he chooses one of the two (alternatives)

If thou wouldst not have the mind of thy spirit in (a state of) perplexity, do not stuff this cotton-wool into thy spiritual ear,

1460 So that thou mayst understand those riddles of His, so that thou mayst apprehend (both) the secret sign and the open

Then the spiritual ear becomes the place where *wahy* (inspiration) descends What is *wahy*? A speech hidden from sense-perception

The spiritual ear and eye are other than this sense-perception, the ear of (discursive) reason and the ear of opinion are destitute of this (inspiration)

The word "compulsion" (*jabr*) made me impatient (uncon-

trollable) for love's sake, while it confined in (the prison of) compulsion him who is not a lover

This is union with God, and it is not compulsion this is the shining forth of the moon, this is not a cloud

And if this be compulsion, it is not the compulsion of (suffered 1465
by) the vulgar it is not the compulsion of (exerted by) the evil-commanding self-willed (soul)

O son, (only) they know (the real meaning of) compulsion in whose hearts God has opened the sight (of the spiritual eye)

To them the unseen things of the future became manifest, to them recollection of the past became naught

Their freewill and compulsion is different (from that of ordinary men) in oyster-shells drops (of rain) are pearls

Outside (of the shell) it is a drop of water, small or great, (but) within the shell it is a small or big pearl

Those persons have the nature of the muskdeer's gland 1470
externally they are (as) blood, while within them is the fragrance of musk

Do not say, "This substance externally is blood how should it become a musky perfume when it goes into the gland?"

Do not say, "This copper externally was despicable how should it assume nobility in the heart (midst) of the elixir?"

In thee (the matter of) freewill and compulsion was a (mere) fancy, (but) when it went into them it became the light of (Divine) Majesty

When bread is (wrapped) in the tablecloth it is the inanimate thing (so-called), (but) in the human body it becomes the glad spirit (of life)

It does not become transmuted in the heart of (within) the table- 1475
cloth the (animal) soul transmutes it with (the water of) Salsabil

O thou who readest aright such is the power of the soul what, then, must be the power of that Soul of soul?

The piece of flesh which is Man, endowed with intelligence and soul, cleaves mountain and sea and mine

The strength of the mountain-riving soul is (shown in) the splitting of rocks, the strength of the Soul of soul in *the moon was split asunder*

If the heart should open the lid of the wallet of (this) mystery, the soul would rush (in rapture) towards the highest heaven

How Adam imputed that fault (which he had committed) to himself, saying, "O Lord, we have done wrong," *and how Iblis imputed his own sin to God, saying,* "Because Thou hast seduced me"

Consider both our action and the action of God Regard our 1480
action as existent This is manifest

If the action of created beings be not in the midst (obviously existent), then say not to any one, "Why have you acted thus?"

The creative act of God brings our actions into existence our actions are the effects of the creative act of God

A rational being perceives either the letter (the outer sign) or the (inner) purpose (the spirit) how should he comprehend two accidents at once?

If he goes (turns his mind) to the spirit, he becomes unheedful of the letter no eye sees forward and backward at the same moment

1485 At the time when you look in front, how at the same time can you look behind you? Recognise this

Inasmuch as the soul does not comprehend (both) the letter and the spirit, how should the soul be the creator of them both?

O son, (only) God comprehends both the (one) action does not hinder Him from the other action

Satan said *Because Thou hast seduced me* the vile Devil concealed his own act

Adam said *We have done wrong unto ourselves* he was not, like us, unheedful of the action of God

1490 From respect he concealed it (the action of God) in (regard to) the sin by casting the sin upon himself he ate fruit (was blessed)

After his repentance, He (God) said to him, "O Adam, did not I create in thee that sin and (those) tribulations?

Was it not My foreordainment and destiny? How didst thou conceal that at the time of excusing thyself?"

He (Adam) said, "I was afraid, (so) I did not let respect go (did not fail to observe due respect)" He (God) said, "I too have observed it towards thee"

Whoever brings reverence gets reverence (in return) whoever brings sugar eats almond-cake

1495 For whom are *the good women*? *For the good men* Treat thy friend with honour, offend (him) and see (what will happen)

O heart, bring (forward) a parable for the sake of (illustrating) a difference, that thou mayst know (what distinguishes) compulsion from freewill

(Take the case of) a hand that is shaking from (morbid or involuntary) tremor and (the case of) a person whose hand you cause to shake (by knocking it away) from its place

Know that both (these) movements are created by God, but it is impossible to compare the latter with the former

You are sorry for having caused it (his hand) to shake how is the man afflicted with (a morbid) tremor not sorry?

1500 This is the intellectual quest What is (the use of such a) quest, O ingenious one? That perchance (by its means) a man of weak understanding may find his way to that place (gain some idea of the truth)

(Yet) the intellectual quest, though it be (fine as) pearls and coral, is other than the spiritual quest

The spiritual quest is on another plane the spiritual wine has another consistency

At the time when the intellectual quest was in keeping (with the circumstances), this 'Umar was intimate with Bu 'l-Hakam,

(But) when 'Umar went away from intellect towards spirit, Bu 'l-Hakam became Bu Jahl (the father of ignorance) in searching into that (subject)

He is perfect on the side of sense-perception and under- 1505
standing though indeed he is ignorant in regard to the spirit

Know that the quest of the intellect and the senses is (concerned with) effects or secondary causes The spiritual quest is either wonder or the father of wonder (either wonderful or beyond wonder)

The illumination of the spirit comes (then) there remains not, O thou who seekest illumination, conclusion and premise or that which contradicts (a statement) (or) that which renders (its acceptance) necessary,

Because the seer on whom His (God's) Light is dawning is quite independent of the (logical) proof which resembles a (blind man's) staff

Commentary on "And He is with you wheresoever ye be"

Once more we come back to the tale when, indeed, did we go forth from the tale?

If we come to ignorance, that is His prison, and if we come 1510
to knowledge, that is His palace,

And if we come to sleep, we are His intoxicated ones, and if to wakefulness, we are in His hands,

And if we weep, we are a cloud laden with the bounty dispensed by Him, and if we laugh, at that time we are His lightning,

And if (we come) to wrath and war, 'tis the reflexion of His Might, and if to peace and forgiveness, 'tis the reflexion of His Love

Who are we? In this tangled (complex) world what (thing other than He) indeed hath He (who is single) like *alif*? Nothing, nothing

How the ambassador asked 'Umar, may God be well-pleased with him, concerning the cause of the tribulation suffered by spirits in these bodies of clay

He said, "O 'Umar, what was the wisdom and mystery of 1515
imprisoning that pure one (the spirit) in this dirty place?

The pure water has become hidden in mud the pure spirit has become bound in bodies"

He ('Umar) said, "Thou art making a profound inquiry, thou art confining a meaning in a word.

Thou hast imprisoned the free (unconditioned) meaning, thou hast bound the wind in a word.

This thou hast done for a benefit (good purpose), O thou who thyself art blind[1] to the benefit (good purpose) of God.

He from whom (every) benefit was born, how should He not see that which was seen by us?

There are myriads of benefits, and every myriad is (but) a few beside that one.[2]

The breath of thy speech, which is a part of the parts (bodily members), became beneficial: why (then) is the whole of the whole (the universal connexion of spirit and body) devoid (of benefit)?

Thou who art a part—thy act (of speaking) is beneficial: why (then) dost thou lift thy hand to assail the whole?

If there is no benefit in speech, do not speak; and if there is, leave off making objections, and endeavour to give thanks."

Thanksgiving to God is a collar on every neck (every one's duty); it is not (thanksgiving) to dispute and make one's face look sour.

If thanksgiving is only to look sour, then there is no thanks-giver like vinegar.

If vinegar wants (to find) the way to the liver, let it become oxymel by (being mixed with) sugar.

The meaning in poetry has no sureness of direction: it is like the sling, it is not under control.

On the inner sense of "Let him who desires to sit with God sit with the Súfís."

The ambassador became beside himself from these one or two cups (of spiritual discourse): neither embassage nor message remained in his memory.

He became distraught at the power of God. The ambassador arrived at this place (state) and became a king.

When the torrent reached the sea, it became the sea; when the seed reached the cornland, it became the crop of corn.

When the bread attained to connexion with the animal (man), the dead bread became living and endowed with knowledge.

When the wax and firewood were devoted to the fire, their dark essence became (filled with) light.

When the (powdered) stone of antimony went into the eyes, it turned to sight and there became a scout (one who observes the enemy from some point of vantage).

[1] Literally, "in a veil."
[2] The confinement of the spirit in the body.

Oh, happy is the man who was freed from himself and united with the existence of a living one!

Alas for the living one who consorted with the dead! He became dead, and life sped away from him

When you have fled (for refuge) to the Qur'án of God, you have mingled with the spirit of the prophets

The Qur'án is (a description of) the states of the prophets, (who are) the fishes of the holy sea of (Divine) Majesty

And if you read and do not accept (take to heart) the Qur'án, suppose you have seen the prophets and saints (what will that avail you?),

But if you are accepting (the Qur'án), when you read the stories (of the prophets), the bird, your soul, will be distressed in its cage

The bird that is a prisoner in a cage, (if it) is not seeking to escape, 'tis from ignorance

The spirits which have escaped from their cages are the prophets, (those) worthy guides

From without comes their voice, (telling) of religion, (and crying), "This, this is the way of escape for thee

By this we escaped from this narrow cage there is no means of escape from this cage but this way,

(That) thou shouldst make thyself ill, exceedingly wretched, in order that thou mayst be let out from (the cage of) reputation "

Worldly reputation is a strong chain in the Way how is this less than a chain of iron?

The story of the merchant to whom the parrot gave a message for the parrots of India on the occasion of his going (thither) to trade

There was a merchant, and he had a parrot imprisoned in a cage, a pretty parrot

When the merchant made ready for travel and was about to depart to India,

Because of his generosity he said to each male slave and each handmaid, "What shall I bring (home) for you? Tell (me) quickly "

Each one asked him for some object of desire that good man gave his promise to them all

He said to the parrot, "What present would you like me to bring for you from the land of India?"

The parrot said, "When thou seest the parrots there, explain my plight (and say),

'Such and such a parrot, who is longing for you, is in my prison by the destiny of Heaven

She salutes you and asks for justice and desires (to learn) from you the means and way of being rightly guided.

1555 She says, "Is it meet that I in yearning (after you) should give up the ghost and die here in separation?

Is this right—(that) I (should be) in grievous bondage, while ye are now on green plants, now on trees?

The faith kept by friends, is it like this?—I in this prison and ye in the rose-garden.

O ye noble ones, call to mind this piteous bird, (and drink in memory of me) a morning-draught amongst the meadows!

Happy it is for a friend to be remembered by friends, in particular when that (beloved) is Laylá and this (lover) Majnún.

1560 O ye who consort with your charming and adored one, am I to be drinking cups filled with my own blood?

(O thou who art my beloved), quaff one cup of wine in memory of me, if thou desirest to do me justice,

Or (at least), when thou hast drunk, spill one draught on the earth in memory of this fallen one who sifts dust.

Oh, where, I wonder, is that covenant and oath? Where are the promises of that lip like candy?

If thy having forsaken thy slave is because of (his) ill service (to thee)—when thou doest ill to the ill-doer, then what is the difference (between master and slave)?

1565 Oh, the ill thou doest in wrath and quarrel is more delightful than music and the sound of the harp.

Oh, thy cruelty is better than felicity, and thy vengeance dearer than life.

This is thy fire: how (what) must be thy light! This is (thy) mourning, so how (what) indeed must be thy festival!

In respect of the sweetnesses which thy cruelty hath, and in respect of thy beauty, no one gets to the bottom of thee.[1]

I complain, and (yet) I fear lest he believe me and from kindness make that cruelty less.

1570 I am exceedingly enamoured of his violence and his gentleness: 'tis marvellous (that) I (am) in love with both these contraries.

By God, if (I escape) from this thorn (of sorrow) and enter the garden (of joy), because of this I shall begin to moan like the nightingale.

This is a wondrous nightingale that opens his mouth to eat thorns and roses together.

What nightingale is this? (Nay), 'tis a fiery monster: because of (his) love all unsweet things are sweetness to him.

He is a lover of the Universal, and he himself is the Universal: he is in love with himself and seeking his own love."'"

[1] *I.e.* thy sweetness and beauty is unfathomable.

Description of the wings of the birds that are Divine Intelligences

Such-like is the tale of the parrot which is the soul where is that one who is the confidant of (the spiritual) birds? 1575

Where is a bird, weak and innocent, and within him Solomon with (all) his host?

When he moans bitterly, without thanksgiving or complaint, a noise of tumult falls on (arises in) the Seven Spheres (of Heaven)

At every moment (there come) to him from God a hundred missives, a hundred couriers from him one (cry of) "O my Lord!" and from God a hundred (cries of) "*Labbayka*" ("Here am I")

In the sight of God his backsliding is better than obedience, beside his infidelity all faiths are tattered (worthless)

Every moment he hath an ascension (to God) peculiar to himself He (God) lays upon his crown a hundred peculiar crowns 1580

His form is on earth and his spirit in "no-place," a "no-place" beyond the imagination of travellers (on the mystic Way)

Not such a "no-place" that it should come into thy understanding (or that) a fancy about it should be born in thee every moment,

Nay, place and "no-place" are in his control, just as the four (Paradisal) rivers are in the control of one who dwells in Paradise

Cut short the explanation of this and avert thy face from it do not breathe a word (more)—and God knows best what is right

We return from this (matter), O friends, to the bird and the merchant and India 1585

The merchant accepted this message (and promised) that he would convey the greeting from her (the parrot) to her congeners

How the merchant saw the parrots of India in the plain and delivered the parrot's message

When he reached the farthest bounds of India, he saw a number of parrots in the plain

He halted his beast, then he gave voice, delivered the greeting and (discharged) the trust

One of those parrots trembled exceedingly, fell, and died, and its breath stopped

The merchant repented of having told the news, and said, "I have gone about to destroy the creature 1590

This one, surely, is kin to that little parrot (of mine) they must have been two bodies and one spirit

Why did I do this? Why did I give the message? I have consumed the poor creature by this raw (foolish) speech "

This tongue is like stone and is also fire-like, and that which springs from the tongue is like fire

Do not vainly strike stone and iron against each other, now for the sake of relating (a story), now for the sake of boasting,

1595 Because it is dark, and on every side are fields of cotton how should sparks be amongst cotton?

Iniquitous are those persons who shut their eyes and by such (vain) words set a whole world ablaze

A single word lays waste a (whole) world, turns dead foxes into lions

Spirits in their original nature have the (life-giving) breath of Jesus, (but while they remain embodied) one breath of it (the spirit) is a wound, and the other a plaster

If the (bodily) screen were removed from the spirits, the speech of every spirit would be like (the breath of) the Messiah

1600 If you wish to utter words like sugar, refrain from concupiscence and do not eat this sweetmeat (the desires of the flesh)

Self-control is the thing desired by the intelligent, sweetmeat is what children long for

Whoever practises self-control ascends to Heaven, whoever eats sweetmeat falls farther behind

Commentary on the saying of Faridu'ddin 'Attar, may God sanctify his spirit –

"Thou art a sensualist O heedless one, drink blood (mortify thyself) amidst the dust (of thy bodily existence),

For if the spiritualist drink a poison, it will be (to him as) an antidote "

It does not harm the spiritualist (saint) though he drink deadly poison for all to see

Because he has attained to (spiritual) health and has been set free from (the need for) abstinence, (while) the poor seeker (of God) is (still) in the (state of) fever

1605 The Prophet said, "O bold seeker, beware! Do not contend with any one who is sought "

In thee is a Nimrod do not go into the fire If thou wish to go in, first become Abraham!

When thou art neither a swimmer nor a seaman, do not cast thyself (into the sea) from a (feeling of) self-conceit

He (the saint) fetches pearls from the bottom of the sea, from losses he brings gain to the surface

If a perfect man (saint) take earth, it becomes gold, if an imperfect one has carried away gold, it becomes ashes

Since that righteous man is accepted of God, his hand in (all) things is the hand of God

The hand of the imperfect man is the hand of Devil and demon, because he is in the trap of imposition and guile

If ignorance come to him (the perfect man), it becomes knowledge, (but) the knowledge that goes into the imperfect man becomes ignorance

Whatever an ill man takes becomes illness, (but) if a perfect man takes infidelity, it becomes religion

O thou who, being on foot, hast contended with a horseman, thou wilt not save thy head Now hold thy foot (desist)!

How the magicians paid respect to Moses, on whom be peace, saying, "What dost thou command? Wilt thou cast down thy rod first, or shall we?"

The magicians in the time of the accursed Pharaoh, when they contended with Moses in enmity,

Yet gave Moses the precedence—the magicians held him in honour—

Because they said to him, "'Tis for thee to command (if) thou wishest to be the first, do thou cast down thy rod first (of all)"

"Nay," said he, "first do ye, O magicians, cast down those tricks (objects of enchantment) into the middle (where all can see them)"

This amount of respect purchased their (belief in) (the true) religion, so that it (the true belief) cut off the hands and feet of their contention (prevented them from disputing further with Moses)

When the magicians acknowledged his (Moses') right, they sacrificed their hands and feet (as a penance) for the sin of that (contention)

To the perfect man (every) mouthful (of food) and (every) saying is lawful Thou art not perfect do not eat, be mute,

Inasmuch as thou art an ear and he a tongue, not thy congener God said to the ears, "*Be silent*"

When the sucking babe is born, at first it keeps silence for a while, it is all ear

For a while it must close its lips (and refrain) from speech, until it learns to speak,

And if it is not (silent like) an ear but makes babbling sounds, it makes itself the dumbest creature in the world

He that is deaf by nature, he that had no ear at the beginning, is dumb how should he burst into speech?

Since, in order to speak, one must first hear, do thou come to speech by the way of hearing

Enter ye the houses by their doors, and seek ye the ends in their causes

There is no speech independent of the way of hearing except the speech of the Creator who is without want

1630 He is the Originator, He follows no master, He is the support of all things, He hath no support,

(While) the rest, (engaged) in handicrafts and talk, follow a master and have need of a pattern

If thou art not alien to (unfit to hear) this discourse, assume the frock of a dervish and (take to shedding) tears in some deserted place,

Because Adam by means of tears escaped from that reproof moist tears are the breath (speech) of the penitent

For weeping's sake Adam came (down) to the earth, that he might be weeping and moaning and sorrowful

1635 Adam, (cast out) from Paradise and from above the Seven (Heavens), went to the "shoe-row"[1] for the purpose of excusing himself

If thou art from the back of Adam and from his loins, be constant in seeking (forgiveness) amongst his company

Prepare a dessert of heart-fire (burning grief) and eye-water (tears) the garden is made open (blooming) by cloud and sun

What dost thou know of the taste of the water of the eyes? Thou art a lover of bread, like the blind (beggars)

If thou make this wallet empty of bread, thou wilt make it full of glorious jewels

1640 Wean the babe, thy soul, from the Devil's milk, and after that make it consort with the Angel

Whilst thou art dark and vexed and gloomy, know that thou art sucking from the same breast as the accursed Devil

The mouthful that gave increase of light and perfection is obtained from lawful earnings

The oil that comes and quenches our lamp - when it quenches a lamp, call it water

From the lawful morsel are born knowledge and wisdom, from the lawful morsel come love and tenderness

1645 When from a morsel thou seest (arise) envy and guile, (and when) ignorance and heedlessness are born (of it), know that it is unlawful

Wilt thou sow wheat and will it produce barley? Hast thou seen a mare bring forth an ass's colt?

The morsel is seed, and thoughts are its fruit, the morsel is the sea and thoughts are its pearls

From the lawful morsel in the mouth is born the inclination to serve (God) and the resolve to go to yonder world

[1] See p 64 note 1 The meaning is that he stood in the place of repentance

How the merchant related to the parrot what he had witnessed on the part of the parrots of India

The merchant finished his trading and returned home glad at heart

He brought a present for every male slave, he gave a token 1650
to every slave-girl

"Where is my present?" asked the parrot "Relate what thou hast said and seen"

"Nay," said he, "indeed I am repenting of that (which I said), gnawing my hand and biting my fingers (in remorse)

Why, from ignorance and folly, did I idly bear (such) an inconsiderate message?"

"O master," said the parrot, "what is thy repentance for? What is it that causes this anger and grief?"

"I told thy complaints," said he, "to a company of parrots 1655
resembling thee

One parrot got scent of (understood) thy pain her heart broke[1], and she trembled and died

I became sorry, (thinking) 'why did I say this?' but what was the use of repenting after I had said it?"

Know that a word which suddenly shot from the tongue is like an arrow shot from the bow

O son, that arrow does not turn back on its way you must dam a torrent at the source

When it left the source behind, it swept over a world (of 1660
country) if it lays waste the world, 'tis no wonder

There is an unseen bringing forth of effects to (our) action, and the results born of it are not in the control of (human) creatures

Those results are all created by God without any partner, though they are imputed to us

Zayd let fly an arrow in the direction of 'Amr his arrow gripped 'Amr like a leopard

During a long time, a (whole) year, it was producing pain pains are created by God, not by man

If Zayd who shot (the arrow) died of fright at the moment 1665
(when 'Amr was wounded), (nevertheless) pains are continually being produced there (in 'Amr's body) until ('Amr's) death

Inasmuch as he ('Amr) died from the results of the hurt (inflicted on him), for this cause call Zayd, who shot (the arrow), the murderer

Impute those pains to him, though all of them are the work of the Creator

So with sowing and breathing (speaking) and (laying) snares and sexual intercourse the results of those (actions) are amenable to (determined by the will of) God

[1] Literally, 'her gall-bladder burst'

The saints possess power (derived) from God they turn back from its course the arrow that has sped

1670 When the saint repents, he closes the doors of the results (shuts off the results) from the cause[1] by that hand (power) of the Lord

Through the opening of the door (of Divine grace), he makes unsaid what has been said, so that neither spit nor roast-meat is burnt thereby[2]

He wipes out the saying from all the minds that heard it, and makes it imperceptible

O sire, if thou must needs have demonstration and proof (of this), recite "(*Whatever*) *verse* (*We cancel*) *or cause to be forgotten*"

Read the verse "*They made you forget My warning*" acknowledge their (the saints') power to put forgetfulness (in men's hearts)

1675 Since they are able to make (you) remember and forget, they are mighty over all the hearts of (God's) creatures

When he (the saint) has blocked the road of (your) mental perception by means of forgetfulness, it is impossible (for you) to act, even if there be virtue (in you)

Think ye those exalted ones are a laughing-stock? Recite from the Qur'án as far as (the words) "*They made you forget*"

He that owns a village is king over bodies, he that owns a heart[3] is king over your hearts

Without any doubt, action (practice) is a branch of (subordinate to) seeing (theory)[4] therefore Man is nothing but "the little man" (the pupil of the eye)

1680 I dare not expound the whole of this (subject) hindrance thereto is coming from those who are at the centre

Inasmuch as the forgetfulness and recollection of (God's) creatures are with him (depend on the perfect saint), and he comes at their call for help,

Every night that glorious one is emptying from their hearts hundreds of thousands of good and evil (thoughts),

(While) in the daytime he is filling their hearts therewith—he is filling those oyster-shells with pearls

By (Divine) guidance (after sleep is past) all those thoughts of former things recognise the spirits (to which they were attached)

1685 Your handicraft and skill come (back) to you, that they may open to you the door of (ways and) means

The goldsmith's craft did not go to the ironsmith, the dis-

[1] *I e* he renders the cause inoperative

[2] *I e* so that no harm is done

[3] *I e* the saint

[4] *I e* the miraculous actions of the saints depend on mystical knowledge and insight

position of the good-natured man did not go to the disagreeable one

On the day of Resurrection the handicrafts and dispositions will come, like articles of property, to the claimant (owner)

After sleep also, the handicrafts and dispositions come back in haste to him that claims them as his

At the hour of dawn the handicrafts and thoughts went to the same place where that good and evil (formerly) were

Like carrier pigeons, they bring things useful (to know) from (other) cities to their own city

How the parrot heard what those parrots had done, and died in the cage, and how the merchant made lament for her

When the bird heard what that (other) parrot had done, she trembled exceedingly, fell, and became cold

The merchant, seeing her thus fallen, sprang up and dashed his cap on the ground

When he saw her in this guise and in this state, the merchant sprang forward and tore the breast of his garment

He said, "O beautiful parrot with thy sweet cry, what is this that has happened to thee? Why hast thou become like this?

Oh, alas for my sweet-voiced bird! Oh, alas for my bosom-friend and confidant!

Oh, alas for my melodious bird, the wine of my spirit and my garden and my sweet basil!

Had Solomon possessed a bird like this, how indeed should he have become occupied with those (other) birds?

Oh, alas for the bird which I gained cheaply, and (so) soon turned my face away from her countenance!

O tongue, thou art a great damage to me, (but) since thou art speaking, what should I say to thee?

O tongue, thou art both the fire and the stack how long wilt thou dart this fire upon this stack?

Secretly my soul is groaning because of thee, although it is doing whatsoever thou biddest it

O tongue, thou art a treasure without end O tongue, thou art also a disease without remedy

Thou art at once a whistle and decoy for birds, and a comforter in the desolation of absence (from the Beloved)

How long wilt thou grant me mercy, O merciless one, O thou who hast drawn the bow to take vengeance on me?

Lo, thou hast made my bird fly away Do not browse (any more) in the pasture of injustice!

Either answer me or give redress or mention to me (what will be) the means of (producing) joy

Oh, alas for my darkness-consuming dawn! Oh, alas for my day-enkindling light!

Oh, alas for my bird of goodly flight, that has flown from my end (my last state) to my beginning (my first state)

The ignorant man is in love with pain unto everlasting Arise and read (in the Qur'an) *I swear*[1] as far as (the words) *in trouble*

1710 With thy face I was free from trouble, and in thy river I was unsoiled by froth

These cries of 'Alas' are (caused by) the phantasy (idea) of seeing (the Beloved) and (by) separation from my present existence

'Twas the jealousy of God, and there is no device against God where is a heart that is not (shattered) in a hundred pieces by God's love?

The jealousy (of God) is this, that He is other than all things, that He is beyond explanation and the noise of words

Oh, alas! Would that my tears were an ocean, that they might be strewn as an offering to the fair charmer!

1715 My parrot, my clever-headed bird, the interpreter of my thought and inmost consciousness,

She has told me from the first, that I might remember it, whatsoever should come to me as my allotted portion of right and wrong"

The parrot whose voice comes from (Divine) inspiration and whose beginning was before the beginning of existence—

That parrot is hidden within thee thou hast seen the reflexion of her upon this and that (the things of the phenomenal world)

She takes away thy joy, and because of her thou art rejoicing thou receivest injury from her as though it were justice

1720 O thou who wert burning the soul for the body's sake, thou hast burned (destroyed) the soul and illumined (delighted) the body

I am burning (with love of God) does any one want tinder, let him set his rubbish ablaze with fire from me

Inasmuch as tinder is combustible, take tinder that catches fire (readily)

O alas, O alas, O alas that such a moon became hidden under the clouds!

How should I utter a word?—for the fire in my heart is grown fierce, the lion of separation (from the Beloved) has become raging and blood-shedding

1725 One that even when sober is violent and furious, how will it be when he takes the wine-cup in his hand?

The furious Lion who is beyond description is too great for (cannot be contained in) the wide expanse of the meadow

[1] Literally *I swear not* See Wright's *Arabic Grammar* 3rd ed, vol ii, p 305

I am thinking of rhymes, and my Sweetheart says to me, "Do not think of aught except vision of Me

Sit at thy ease, My rhyme-meditating (friend) in My presence thou art rhymed with (attached to) felicity

What are words that thou shouldst think of them? What are words? Thorns in the hedge of the vineyard

I will throw word and sound and speech into confusion, that without these three I may converse with thee

That word which I kept hidden from Adam I will speak to thee, O (thou who art the) consciousness of the world

(I will tell to thee) that word which I did not communicate to Abraham, and that pain (love) which Gabriel does not know"

That word of which the Messiah (Jesus) breathed not a word God, from jealousy, did not utter even without *ma*

What is *ma* in language? Positive and negative[1] I am not positive, I am selfless and negated

I found (true) individuality in non-individuality therefore I wove (my) individuality into non-individuality

All kings are enslaved to their slaves, all people are dead (ready to die) for one who dies for them

All kings are prostrate before one who is prostrate before them, all people are intoxicated with (love for) one who is intoxicated with them

The fowler becomes a prey to the birds in order that of a sudden he may make them his prey

The hearts of heart-ravishers are captivated by those who have lost their hearts (to them) all loved ones are the prey of (their) lovers

Whomsoever thou didst deem to be a lover, regard (him) as the loved one, for relatively he is both this and that

If they that are thirsty seek water from the world, (yet) water too seeks in the world them that are thirsty

Inasmuch as He is (thy) lover, do thou be silent as He is pulling thine ear, be thou (all) ear

Dam the torrent (of ecstasy) when it runs in flood, else it will work shame and ruin

What care I though ruin be (wrought)? Under the ruin there is a royal treasure

He that is drowned in God wishes to be more drowned, (while) his spirit (is tossed) up and down like the waves of the sea,

(Asking), "Is the bottom of the sea more delightful, or the top? Is His (the Beloved's) arrow more fascinating, or the shield?"

O heart, thou art torn asunder by evil suggestion if thou recognise any difference between joy and woe

Although the object of thy desire has the taste of sugar, is

[1] Literally 'affirmation and negation'

not absence of any object of desire (in thee) the object of the Beloved's desire?

Every star of His is the blood-price of a hundred new moons it is lawful for Him to shed the blood of the (whole) world

1750 We gained the price and the blood-price we hastened to gamble our soul away

Oh, the life of lovers consists in death thou wilt not win the (Beloved's) heart except in losing thine own

I sought (to win) His heart with a hundred airs and graces, (but) He made excuses to me (put me off) in disdain

I said, "After all, this mind and soul (of mine) are drowned in Thee" "Begone," said He, "begone! Do not chant these spells over Me (do not seek thus to beguile Me)

Do not I know what thought thou hast conceived? O thou who hast seen double, how hast thou regarded the Beloved?

1755 O gross-spirited one, thou hast held Me in light esteem, because thou hast bought Me very cheaply

He that buys cheaply gives cheaply a child will give a pearl for a loaf of bread"

I am drowned in a love (so deep) that therein are drowned the first loves and the last

I have told it summarily, I have not explained it (at length), otherwise both (thy) perceptions and (my) tongue would be consumed

When I speak of "lip," 'tis the lip (shore) of the Sea, when I say "not," the intended meaning is "except

1760 By reason of (inward) sweetness I sit with sour face from fullness of speech I am silent

That in the mask of sour-facedness my sweetness may be kept hidden from the two worlds

In order that this subject may not come to every ear, I am telling (only) one out of a hundred esoteric mysteries

Commentary on the saying of the Hakim (Sana'i)
"Any thing that causes thee to be left behind on the Way, what matter whether it be infidelity or faith?
Any form that causes thee to fall far from the Beloved, what matter whether it be ugly or beautiful?" —
and (a discourse) on the meaning of the words of the Prophet, on whom be peace "Verily, Sa'd is jealous, and I am more jealous than Sa'd, and Allah is more jealous than I, and because of His jealousy He hath forbidden foul actions both outward and inward"

The whole world became jealous because God is superior to all the world in jealousy

He is like the spirit, and the world is like the body the body receives from the spirit (both) good and evil

Any one whose prayer-niche is turned to the (mystical) revelation, do thou regard his going (back) to (the traditional) faith as shameful.

Any one who has become Master of the robes to the King, it is loss for him to traffic on the King's behalf.

Any one who becomes the intimate friend of the Sultan, it is an injury and swindle (for him) to wait at his door.

When (the privilege of) kissing the (King's) hand has been bestowed on him by the King, it is a sin if he prefers to kiss the (King's) foot.

Although to lay the head on the (King's) foot is an act of obeisance, (yet) compared with the former act of obeisance it is a fault and backsliding.

The King is jealous of any one who, after having seen the face, prefers the (mere) scent.

To speak in parables, God's jealousy is the wheat, (while) men's jealousy is the straw in the stack.

Know that the root of (all) jealousies is in God: those of mankind are an offshoot from God, without resemblance (being implied).

I will leave the explanation of this and will begin to complain of the cruelty of that fickle Beauty.

I wail because wailings are pleasant to Him: He wants from the two worlds wailing and grief.

How should I not wail bitterly on account of His deceit, since I am not in the circle of those intoxicated with Him?

How should I not mourn, like night, without His day and without the favour of His day-illuming countenance?

His unsweetness is sweet in my soul: may my soul be sacrificed to the Beloved who grieves my heart!

I am in love with my grief and pain for the sake of pleasing my peerless King.

I make the dust of sorrow a salve for mine eye, that the two seas of mine eyes may be filled with pearls.

The tears which people shed for His sake are pearls—and people think they are tears.

I am complaining of the Soul of the soul, (but in truth) I am not complaining: I am (only) relating.

My heart is saying, "I am tormented by Him," and I have (long) been laughing at its poor pretence.

Do (me) right, O glory of the righteous, O Thou who art the dais, and I the threshold of Thy door!

Where are threshold and dais in reality? In the quarter where our Beloved is, where are "we" and "I"?

O Thou whose soul is free from "we" and "I," O Thou who art the subtle essence of the spirit in man and woman,

When man and woman become one, Thou art that One; when the units are wiped out, lo, Thou art that (Unity).

Thou didst contrive this "I" and "we" in order that Thou mightst play the game[1] of worship with Thyself,

That all "I's" and "thou's" should become one soul and at last should be submerged in the Beloved.

All this is (true), and do Thou come, O (Lord of the) Creative Word[2], O Thou who transcendest "Come" and (all) speech!

1790 The body can see Thee (only) in bodily fashion: it fancies (pictures to itself) Thy sadness or laughter.

Do not say that the heart that is bound (conditioned) by (such bodily attributes as) sadness and laughter is worthy of seeing Thee (as Thou really art).

He who is bound by sadness and laughter is living by means of these two borrowed (transient and unreal) things.

In the verdant garden of Love, which is without end, there are many fruits besides sorrow and joy.

Love is higher than these two states of feeling: without spring and without autumn it is (ever) green and fresh.

1795 Pay the tithe on Thy fair face, O Beauteous One: relate the story of the soul that is rent in pieces,

For by the coquetry of a glance One who is given to glancing amorously has branded my heart anew.

I absolved Him if He shed my blood: I was saying, "It is lawful (I absolve Thee)," and He was fleeing (from me).

Since Thou art fleeing from the lament of those who are (as) dust, why pourest Thou sorrow on the hearts of the sorrowful?

O Thou, whom every dawn that shone from the East found overflowing (with abundant grace) like the bright fountain (of the sun),

1800 How didst Thou give (nothing but) evasion to Thy frenzied lover, O Thou the sugar of whose lips hath no price?

O Thou who art a new soul to the old world, hear the cry (that comes) from my body (which is) without soul and heart.

Leave the tale of the Rose! For God's sake set forth the tale of the Nightingale that is parted from the Rose!

Our emotion is not caused by grief and joy, our consciousness is not related to fancy and imagination.

There is another state (of consciousness), which is rare: do not thou disbelieve, for God is very mighty.

1805 Do not judge from the (normal) state of man, do not abide in wrong-doing and in well-doing.

Wrong-doing and well-doing, grief and joy, are things that

[1] Literally, *nard*, a kind of backgammon.

[2] Literally, "The Command (which is) Be!" Another reading is ای امر کن, "O Thou who givest the Command."

come into existence, those who come into existence die God is their heir

'Tis dawn O Thou who art the support and refuge of the dawn, ask pardon (for me) of my Lord Husámu'ddín!

Thou art He who asketh pardon of the Universal Mind and Soul, Thou art the Soul of the soul and the Splendour of the coral

The light of dawn has shone forth, and from Thy light we are engaged in drinking the morning-drink with the wine of Thy Mansur[1]

Inasmuch as Thy gift keeps me thus (enravished), who (what) 1810
is (other) wine that it should bring me rapture?

Wine in ferment is a beggar suing for our ferment, Heaven in revolution is a beggar suing for our consciousness

Wine became intoxicated with us, not we with it, the body came into being from us, not we from it

We are as bees, and bodies are as wax (honeycomb) we have made the body, cell by cell, like wax

Reverting to the tale of the merchant who went to trade (in India)

This (discourse) is very long Tell the story of the merchant, that we may see what happened to that good man

The merchant in fire (burning grief) and anguish and yearning 1815
was uttering a hundred distracted phrases like this,

Now self-contradiction, now disdain, now supplication, now passion for reality, now metaphor (unreality)

The drowning man suffers an agony of soul and clutches at every straw

For fear of (losing) his head (life), he flings about (both) hand and foot to see whether any one will take his hand (help him) in peril

The Friend loves this agitation it is better to struggle vainly than to lie still

He who is the King (of all) is not idle, (though) complaint 1820
from Him would be a marvel, for He is not ill

For this reason said the Merciful (God), O son, "*Every day He is (busy) in an affair*," O son

In this Way be thou ever scraping and scratching (exerting thyself to the utmost) until thy last breath do not be unoccupied for a moment,

So that thy last breath may be a last breath in which the (Divine) favour is thy bosom-friend

Whatsoever the soul which is in man and woman strives to do, the ear and eye of the soul's King are at the window.

[1] I e Hallāj, who said "*Ana 'l-Haqq*"

How the merchant cast the parrot out of the cage and how the dead parrot flew away

1825 After that, he cast her out of the cage. The little parrot flew to a lofty bough.

The dead parrot made such a (swift) flight as when the orient sun rushed onward.

The merchant was amazed at the action of the bird: without understanding he suddenly beheld the mysteries of the bird.

He lifted up his face and said, "O nightingale, give us profit (instruction) by explaining thy case.

What did she (the parrot) do there (in India), that thou didst learn, devise a trick, and burn us (with grief)?"

1830 The parrot said, "She by her act counselled me—'Abandon thy charm of voice and thy affection (for thy master),

Because thy voice has brought thee into bondage': she feigned herself dead for the sake of (giving me) this counsel,

Meaning (to say), 'O thou who hast become a singer to high and low, become dead like me, that thou mayst gain release.'"

If you are a grain, the little birds will peck you up; if you are a bud, the children will pluck you off.

Hide the grain (bait), become wholly a snare; hide the bud, become the grass on the roof.

1835 Any one who offers his beauty to auction, a hundred evil fates set out towards him (and overtake him).

Plots and angers and envies pour upon his head, like water from waterskins.

Foes tear him to pieces from jealousy; even friends take his lifetime away.

He that was heedless of the sowing and the springtide, how should he know the value of this lifetime?

You must flee to the shelter of God's grace, who shed thousandfold grace upon (our) spirits,

1840 That you may find a shelter. Then how (will you lack) shelter? Water and fire will become your army.

Did not the sea become a friend to Noah and Moses? Did it not become overbearing in vengeance against their enemies?

Was not the fire a fortress for Abraham, so that it raised smoke (sighs of despair) from the heart of Nimrod?

Did not the mountain call Yahyá (John the Baptist) to itself and drive off his pursuers with blows of stone?

"O Yahyá," it said, "come, take refuge in me, that I may be thy shelter from the sharp sword."

How the parrot bade farewell to the merchant and flew away

The parrot gave him one or two counsels full of (spiritual) savour and after that bade him the farewell of parting 1845

The merchant said to her, "Go, God protect thee! Just now thou hast shown to me a new Way"

Said the merchant to himself, "This is the counsel for me, I will take her Way, for this Way is shining with light

How should my soul be meaner than the parrot? The soul ought to follow a good track like this"

The harmfulness of being honoured by the people and of becoming conspicuous

The body is cage-like the body, amidst the cajoleries of those who come in and go out, became a thorn to the soul

This one says to him, "I will be thy confidant," and that one says "Nay, I am thy partner" 1850

This one says to him, "There is none in existence like thee for beauty and eminence and for kindness and liberality"

That one says to him, "Both the worlds are thine, all our souls are thy soul's parasites"

When he sees the people intoxicated with (desire for) him, because of arrogance he loses self-control

He does not know that the Devil has cast thousands like him into the water of the river (of destruction)

The world's flattery and hypocrisy is a sweet morsel eat less of it (eat it not), for it is a morsel full of fire 1855

Its fire is hidden and its taste is manifest its smoke becomes visible in the end

Do not say, "How should I swallow that praise? He is speaking from desire (for reward) I am on his track (and see quite well what he is after)"

If your belauder should satirise you in public, your heart would burn for (many) days on account of those scorches (of vituperation)

Although you know that he (only) said it in disappointment because the hopes he had of you brought him no gain,

(Yet) the effect thereof is remaining within you The same experience happens to you in the case of praise 1860

The effect of that too lasts for many days and becomes a source of arrogance and deception of the soul,

But it does not show itself, because praise is sweet, (in the case of blame) the evil shows itself, because blame is bitter

It (blame) is like (bitter) decoctions and pills which you swallow and for a long time you are in disturbance and pain,

Whereas, if you eat *halwá* (sweetmeat), its taste is momentary this effect, like the other, is not enduring for ever

Since it does not endure (perceptibly), it endures imperceptibly recognise every opposite by means of its opposite

When the effect of sugar endures (remains latent), after a while it produces boils that call for the lancet

Pharaoh was made (what he was) by abundance of praises be lowly of spirit through meekness, do not domineer

So far as you can, become a slave, do not be a monarch Suffer blows become like the ball, do not be the bat

Otherwise, when this elegance and beauty remains with you no more, you will be loathed by those companions

The set of people who used to flatter you deceitfully, when they behold you will call you a devil

When they see you at their doors, they all will cry, "A dead man has risen from his grave"

(You will be) like the beardless youth whom they address as "Lord" that by this hypocrisy they may make him infamous

As soon as he has grown a beard in infamy, the Devil is ashamed to search after him

The Devil approaches Man for the sake of wickedness he does not approach *you* because you are worse than the Devil

So long as you were a man the Devil was running at your heels and bidding you taste (his) wine

Since you have become confirmed in devilry, the Devil is fleeing from you, O good-for-nothing!

At that (former) time they clung to your skirt when you became like this they all fled

Explanation of (the Tradition) "Whatsoever God wills cometh to pass"

We have spoken all these words, but in preparing ourselves (for the journey before us) we are naught, naught without the favours of God

Without the favours of God and God's elect ones, angel though he be, his page is black

O God, O Thou whose bounty fulfils (every) need, it is not allowable to mention any one beside Thee

This amount of guidance Thou hast bestowed (upon us), till this (present time) Thou hast covered up many a fault of ours

Cause the drop of knowledge which Thou gavest (us) heretofore to become united with Thy seas

In my soul there is a drop of knowledge deliver it from sensuality and from the body's clay,

Before these clays drink it up, before these winds sweep it away,

Although, when they sweep it away, Thou art able to take it 1885
back from them and redeem it

The drop that vanished in the air or was spilled (on the earth)—when did it flee (escape) from the storehouse of Thy omnipotence?

If it enter into non-existence or a hundred non-existences, it will make a foot of its head (will return in headlong haste) when Thou callest it

Hundreds of thousands of opposites are killing their opposites Thy decree is drawing them forth again (from non-existence)

There is caravan on caravan, O Lord, (speeding) continually from non-existence towards existence

In particular, every night all thoughts and understandings 1890
become naught, plunged in the deep Sea,

Again at the time of dawn those Divine ones lift up their heads from the Sea, like fishes

In autumn the myriads of boughs and leaves go in rout into the sea of Death,

(While) in the garden the crow clothed in black like a mourner makes lament over the (withered) greenery

Again from the Lord of the land[1] comes the edict (saying) to Non-existence, "Give back what thou hast devoured!

Give up, O black Death, what thou hast devoured of plants 1895
and healing herbs and leaves and grass!"

O brother, collect thy wits for an instant (and think) from moment to moment (incessantly) there is autumn and spring within thee

Behold the garden of the heart, green and moist and fresh, full of rosebuds and cypresses and jasmines,

Boughs hidden by the multitude of leaves, vast plain and high palace hidden by the multitude of flowers

These words, which are from Universal Reason, are the scent of those flowers and cypresses and hyacinths

Didst thou (ever) smell the scent of a rose where no rose was? 1900
Didst thou (ever) see the foaming of wine where no wine was?

The scent is thy guide and conducts thee on thy way it will bring thee to Eden and Kawthar

The scent is a remedy for the (sightless) eye, (it is) light-making the eye of Jacob was opened by a scent

The foul scent darkens the eye, the scent of Joseph succours the eye

Thou who art not a Joseph, be a Jacob be (familiar), like him, with weeping and sore distress

Hearken to this counsel from the Sage of Ghazna[2], that thou 1905
mayst feel freshness in thy old body

[1] Literally, "the headman of the village" [2] Saná'í

"Disdain needs a face like the rose, when thou hast not (such a face), do not indulge in[1] ill-temper

Ugly is disdain in an uncomely face, grievous is eye-ache in an unseeing eye"

In the presence of Joseph do not give thyself airs and behave like a beauty offer nothing but the supplication and sighs of Jacob

The meaning of dying (as conveyed) by the parrot was supplication (self-abasement) make thyself dead in supplication and poverty (of spirit),

That the breath of Jesus may revive thee and make thee fair and blessed as itself

How should a rock be covered with verdure by the Spring? Become earth, that thou mayst grow flowers of many a hue

Years hast thou been a heart-jagging rock once, for the sake of experiment, be earth!

The story of the old harper who in the time of 'Umar, may God be well-pleased with him, on a day when he was starving played the harp for God's sake in the graveyard

Hast thou heard that in the time of 'Umar there was a harper, a fine and glorious minstrel?

The nightingale would be made beside herself by his voice by his beautiful voice one rapture would be turned into a hundred

His breath was an ornament to assembly and congregation, and at his song the dead would arise

(He was) like Isráfíl (Seraphiel), whose voice will cunningly bring the souls of the dead into their bodies,

Or he was (like) an accompanist[2] to Isráfíl, for his music would make the elephant grow wings

One day Isráfíl will make a shrill sound and will give life to him that has been rotten for a hundred years

The prophets also have (spiritual) notes within, whence there comes life beyond price to them that seek (God)

The sensual ear does not hear those notes, for the sensual ear is defiled by iniquities

The note of the peri[3] is not heard by man, for he is unable to apprehend the mysteries of the peris

Although the note of the peri too belongs to this world The note of the heart is higher than both breaths (notes)[4],

For peri and man (alike) are prisoners both are (captive) in the prison of this ignorance

[1] Literally 'do not roam round'
[2] Literally 'accompanists' Cf Book III 1473
[3] I.e. one of the Jinn
[4] I.e. the note (voice) of man and the note of the peri

Recite *O community of Jinn (and men)* in the Suratu 'l-Rahmán, recognise (the meaning of) *if ye be able to pass forth*

The inward notes of the saints say, at first, "O ye particles of *lá* (not = not-being),

Take heed, lift up your heads from the *lá* of negation, put forth your heads from this fancy and vain imagining

O ye who all are rotten in (the world of) generation and corruption, your everlasting soul neither grew nor came to birth "

If I tell (even) a tittle of those (saintly) notes, the souls will lift up their heads from the tombs

Put thine ear close, for that (melody) is not far off, but 'tis not permitted to convey it to thee

Hark! for the saints are the Isráfíls of the (present) time from them to the dead comes life and freshness

At their voice the dead souls in the body's grave start up in their winding-sheets

He (that is thus awakened) says, "This voice is separate from (all other) voices to quicken (the dead) is the work of the voice of God

We (had) died and were entirely decayed the call of God came we all arose "

The call of God, (whether it be) veiled or unveiled, bestows that which He bestowed on Mary from His bosom

O ye who are rotten with death (in your hearts) underneath the skin, return from non-existence at the voice of the Friend!

Absolutely, indeed, that voice is from the King (God), though it be from the larynx of God's servant

He (God) has said to him (the saint), "I am thy tongue and eye, I am thy senses and I am thy good pleasure and thy wrath

Go, for thou art (he of whom God saith), 'By Me he hears and by Me he sees' thou art the (Divine) consciousness (itself) what is the occasion (propriety) of (saying), 'Thou art the possessor of the (Divine) consciousness'?

Since thou hast become, through bewilderment, 'He that belongs to God,' I am thine, for 'God shall belong to him '

Sometimes I say to thee, ''Tis thou,' sometimes, ''Tis I' whatever I say, I am the Sun illuminating (all)

Wheresoever I shine forth from the lamp-niche of a breath (Divine word), there the difficulties of a (whole) world are resolved

The darkness which the (earthly) sun did not remove, through My breath that darkness becomes like bright morning "

To an Adam He in His own person showed the (Divine) Names, to the rest He was revealing the Names by means of Adam

Do thou receive His light either from Adam or from Himself take the wine either from the jar or from the gourd (cup),

1945 For this gourd is very closely connected with the jar the blessed gourd is not rejoiced (by the same causes) as thou art

Muṣṭafá (Mohammed) said, "Happy he that has seen me and he that looks at him that saw my face"

When a lamp has derived (its) light from a candle, every one that sees it (the lamp) certainly sees the candle

If transmission (of the light) occurs in this way till a hundred lamps (are lighted), the seeing of the last (lamp) becomes a meeting with the original (light)[1]

Either take with (all) thy soul from the hindmost light—there is no difference—or from the candelabrum

1950 Either behold the light (of God) from the lamp of the last (saints), or behold His light from the candle of those who have gone before

Explanation of the Tradition, "Verily, your Lord hath, during the days of your time, certain breathings oh, address yourselves to (receive) them"

The Prophet said, "In these days the breathings of God prevail

Keep ear and mind (attentive) to these (spiritual) influences, catch up such-like breathings"

The (Divine) breathing came, beheld you, and departed it gave life to whom it would, and departed

Another breathing has arrived Be thou heedful, that thou mayst not miss this one too, O comrade

1955 The soul of fire gained therefrom an extinguisher of (its) fire, the dead soul felt within itself a movement (of life)

This is the freshness and movement of the Tuba-tree, this is not like the movements of animals

If it fall on earth and heaven, their galls will turn to water at once (they will be consumed with terror)

Truly, from fear of this infinite breath (they were filled with dismay) recite (the words of the Qur'an) *but they refused to bear it* (the trust offered to them)

Else how should (the words) *they shrank from it* have been (in the Qur'án), unless from fear of it the heart of the mountain had become blood?

1960 Yesternight this (breath) presented itself (to me) in a different guise (but) some morsels (of food) came in and barred the way

For a morsel's sake a Luqmán has become (held in custody as) a pledge 'tis the time for Luqmán begone, O morsel!

[1] *I.e.* the eye sees the light of the last lamp but what really meets the eye is the light of the candle

These pricks (of the flesh) for the sake of a morsel! Pluck ye forth the thorn from the sole of Luqmán

In his sole there is (really) no thorn or even the shadow of it, but because of concupiscence ye have not that discernment

Know that the thorn is that which thou, because thou art very greedy and very blind, hast deemed to be a date

Inasmuch as Luqmán's spirit is the rose-garden of God, why 1965
is the foot of his spirit wounded by a thorn?

This thorn-eating existence is (like) a camel, and upon this camel one born of Mustafá (Mohammed) is mounted

O camel, on thy back is a bale of roses, from the perfume of which a hundred roseries grew within thee

Thy inclination is towards thorn-bushes and sand I wonder what roses thou wilt gather from worthless thorns

O thou who in this search hast roamed from one quarter to another, how long wilt thou say, "Where, where is this rose-garden?"

Until thou extract this thorn in thy foot, thine eye is dark 1970
(blind) how wilt thou go about?

Man, who is not contained in the world, becomes hidden in the point of a thorn!

Musṭafá (Mohammed) came (into the world) to make harmony (he would say) "Speak to me, O Humayrá, speak!"

O Humayrá, put the horse-shoe in the fire, that by means of thy horse-shoe this mountain may become (glowing with love, like) rubies

This "Humayrá" is a feminine word, and the Arabs call the (word for) "spirit" feminine,

But there is no fear (harm) to the Spirit from being feminine 1975
the Spirit has no association (nothing in common) with man and woman

It is higher than feminine and masculine this is not that spirit which is composed of dryness and moisture

This is not that spirit which is increased by (eating) bread, or which is sometimes like this and sometimes like that

It is a doer of (what is) sweet, and (it is) sweet, and the essence of sweetness Without (inward) sweetness there is no sweetness, O taker of bribes[1]!

When thou art (made) sweet by sugar, it may be that at some time that sugar will vanish from thee,

(But) when thou becomest sugar from abundance of faithful- 1980
ness, then how should sugar be parted from sugar?

When the lover (of God) is fed from (within) himself with pure wine, there reason will remain lost and companionless

Partial (discursive) reason is a denier of Love, though it may give out that it is a confidant

[1] The "taker of bribes" is he who takes pleasure in anything other than God

It is clever and knowing, but it is not naught (devoid of self-existence) until the angel has become naught, he is an Ahriman (Devil)

It (partial reason) is our friend in word and deed, (but) when you come to the case of inward feeling (ecstasy), it is naught (of no account)

It is naught because it did not (pass away) from existence and become non-existent since it did not become naught willingly, (it must become naught nevertheless, for) there is many a one (who became naught, *i e* died) unwillingly

The Spirit is perfection and its call is perfection Mustafá (Mohammed) used to say, "Refresh us, O Bilál!

O Bilál, lift up thy mellifluous voice (drawn) from that breath which I breathed into thy heart,

From that breath by which Adam was dumbfounded and the wits of the people of Heaven were made witless "

Muṣṭafá became beside himself at that beautiful voice his prayer escaped him (was left unperformed) on the night of the *ta'rís*[1]

He did not raise his head from that blessed sleep until the (time of the) dawn-prayer had advanced to (the time of) forenoon

On the night of the *ta'rís* his holy spirit gained (the privilege of) kissing hands in the presence of the Bride

Love and the Spirit are, both of them, hidden and veiled if I have called Him (God) the Bride, do not find fault

I would have been silent from (fear of) the Beloved's displeasure, if He had granted me a respite for one moment

But He keeps saying, "Say on! Come, 'tis no fault, 'tis but the requirement of the (Divine) destiny in the World Unseen "

The fault is (in him) who sees nothing but fault how should the Pure Spirit of the Invisible see fault?

Fault arises (only) in relation to the ignorant creature, not in relation to the Lord of favour (clemency)

Infidelity, too, is wisdom in relation to the Creator, (but) when you impute it to us, infidelity is a noxious thing

And if there be one fault together with a hundred advantages (excellences), it resembles the wood (woody stalk) in the sugarcane

Both (sugar and stalk) alike are put into the scales, because they both are sweet like body and soul

Not idly, therefore, the great (mystics) said this "The body of the holy ones (the saints) is essentially pure as (their) spirit "

Their speech and soul and form, all (this) is absolute spirit without (external) trace

[1] This word is used of travellers who halt for repose in the latter part of the night

The spirit that regards them with enmity is a mere body, like the plus in (the game called) *nard*, it is a mere name

That one (the body of the enemy of the saints) went into the earth (grave) and became earth entirely, this (holy body) went into the salt and became entirely pure—

The (spiritual) salt through which Mohammed is more refined (than all others) he is more eloquent than that salt-seasoned (elegantly expressed) *Hadíth*

This salt is surviving in his heritage those heirs of his are 2005
with thee Seek them!

He (the spiritual heir of Mohammed) is seated in front of thee, (but) where indeed is thy "front"? He is before thee, (but) where is the soul that thinks "before"?

If thou fancy thou hast a "before" and "behind," thou art tied to body and deprived of spirit

"Below" and "above," "before" and "behind" are attributes of the body the essence of the bright spirit is without direction (not limited by relations of place)

Open thy (inward) vision with the pure light of the King Beware of fancying, like one who is short-sighted,

That thou art only this very (body living) in grief and joy 2010
O (thou who art really) non-existence, where (are) "before" and "behind" (appertaining) to non-existence?

'Tis a day of rain journey on till night—not (sped) by this (earthly) rain but by the rain of the Lord

The story of 'Á'isha, may God be well-pleased with her, how she asked Mustafa (Mohammed), on whom be peace, saying, "It rained to-day since thou wentest to the graveyard, how is it that thy clothes are not wet?"

One day Mustafá went to the graveyard he went with the bier of a man (who was one) of his friends

He made the earth so that it filled his grave he quickened his seed under the earth

These trees are like the interred ones they have lifted up their hands from the earth

They are making a hundred signs to the people and speaking 2015
plainly to him that hath ears (to hear)

With green tongue and with long hand (fingers) they are telling secrets from the earth's conscience (inmost heart)

(Sunk in earth) like ducks that have plunged their heads in water, they have become (gay as) peacocks, though (in winter) they were (dark and bare) as crows

If during the winter He imprisoned them (in ice and snow), God made those "crows" "peacocks" (in spring)

Although He put them to death in winter, He revived them by means of spring and gave (them) leaves

2020 The sceptics say, "This (creation), surely, is eternal why should we fix it on a beneficent Lord?"

God, in despite of them, caused (spiritual) gardens and plots of sweet flowers to grow in the hearts of His friends

Every rose that is sweet-scented within, that rose is telling of the secrets of the Universal

Their scent, to the confusion of the sceptics, is going round the world, rending the veil (of doubt and disbelief)

The sceptics, (shrinking) from the scent of the rose like a beetle, or like a delicate (sensitive) brain at the noise of the drum,

2025 Feign themselves to be occupied and absorbed, and withdraw their eyes from the flash and the lightning

They withdraw their eyes, but no eye is there the eye is that which sees a place of safety

When the Prophet returned from the graveyard, he went to the Ṣiddíqa[1] and confided (in her)

As soon as the eye of the Siddiqa fell upon his countenance, she advanced and began to lay her hand on him,

On his turban and his face and his hair, on his collar and chest and arm

2030 Said the Prophet, "What art thou seeking so hastily?" She replied, "To-day rain fell from the clouds

I am searching thy garments in quest (of moisture), I do not feel them wet with the rain Oh, how wonderful!"

The Prophet said, "What wrap hast thou thrown over thy head?" Said she, "I made that *rida* (plaid) of thine (serve as) a head-covering"

He said, "O pure-bosomed one, that is why God revealed to thy pure eye the rain of the Unseen

That rain is not from your clouds there are other clouds and another sky"

Commentary on the verse of Hakim (Sanâ'í)

"In the realm of the soul are skies lording over the sky of this world
In the Way of the spirit there are lowlands and highlands, there are lofty mountains and seas

2035 The Unseen World has other clouds and water (than ours), it has another sky and sun

That is not discerned save by the elect, the rest are *in doubt as to a new creation*

There is rain for the sake of nurture, there is (also) rain for the sake of decay

Marvellous is the benefit of the rain of springtime, (but) to the garden the autumnal rain is like a (consuming) fever

[1] "The exceedingly veracious woman" a name given to 'A'isha

That vernal (rain) makes it tenderly nurtured (flourishing), while this autumnal (rain) makes it sickly and wan

Similarly know that cold and wind and sun are at variance (produce various effects), and find the clue

Even so in the Unseen World there are these different sorts, (consisting) in loss and gain and in profit and defraudment (damage)

This breath of the *Abdal* (saints) is from that (spiritual) springtide from it there grows a green garden in heart and soul

From their breaths there comes (is produced) in him who is fortunate the (same) effect (as that) of the spring rain on the tree

If there be in the place a dry tree, do not deem its defect to be due to the life-quickening wind

The wind did its own work and blew on he that had a soul chose it in preference to his soul

On the meaning of the Tradition, "Take advantage of the coolness of the spring season, etc"

The Prophet said, "Give heed, my friends! Do not cover your bodies from the cold of spring,

For it does to your spirits the same thing that spring does to the trees,

But flee from the cold of autumn, for it does what autumn did to the garden and the vines"

The traditionists have referred this (saying) to the outward (sense), and have been content with that same (outward) form

That class (of people) were ignorant of the spirit they saw the mountain, they did not see the mine in the mountain

In the sight of God that "autumn" is the flesh (*nafs*) and (its) desires the reason and the spirit are the essence of spring and are everlasting life

Thou hast a partial reason hidden (within thee) (now) in this world seek one whose reason is perfect

Through his whole thy part is made whole (and perfect) Universal Reason is like a shackle on the neck of the flesh

Therefore, according to the (right) interpretation, it (the meaning) is this, that the holy breaths are like spring and the life of leaf and vine

The sayings of the saints, whether soft or rough, do not thou cover thy body (against them), for they are the support of thy religion

Whether he (the saint) speak hot or cold, receive (his words) with joy thereby thou wilt escape from the hot and cold (of Nature) and from Hell-fire

His "hot" and "cold" is life's new season of spring, the source of sincerity and faith and service

Inasmuch as the garden of the spirits is living through him, and the sea of (his) heart is filled with these pearls,

Thousands of griefs lie (heavy) on a wise man's heart, if from the garden of his heart (even) a toothpick fail (be missing).[1]

How the Siddiqa ('Á'isha), may God be well-pleased with her, asked Muṣṭafá (Mohammed), God bless him and give him peace, saying, "What was the inner meaning of to-day's rain?"

2060 The Siddiqa said, "O (thou who art the) cream of existence, what was the (true) reason of to-day's rain?

Was it (one) of the rains of mercy, or (was it) for the sake of menace and the justice of (Divine) Majesty?

Was it from the favour of the vernal attributes, or from a baneful autumnal attribute?"

He said, "This (rain) was for the purpose of allaying the grief that is upon the race of Adam in calamity.

If man were to remain in that fire (of grief), much ruin and loss would befall.

2065 This world would at once become desolate: (all) selfish desires would go forth from men."

Forgetfulness (of God), O beloved, is the pillar (prop) of this world: (spiritual) intelligence is a bane to this world.

Intelligence belongs to that (other) world, and when it prevails, this world is overthrown.

Intelligence is the sun and cupidity the ice; intelligence is the water and this world the dirt.

A little trickle (of intelligence) is coming from yonder world, that cupidity and envy may not roar (too loudly) in this world.

2070 If the trickle from the Unseen should become greater, in this world neither virtue nor vice will be left.

This (topic) has no bound. Go to the starting-point, go back to the tale of the minstrel.

The remainder of the story of the old harper and the explanation of its issue (moral).

That minstrel by whom the world was filled with rapture, from whose voice wondrous phantasies grew (arose in the minds of those who heard him),

At whose song the bird of the soul would take wing, and at whose note the mind of the spirit would be distraught—

When time passed and he grew old, from weakness the falcon, his soul, became a catcher of gnats.

[1] I.e. the wise man feels bitter remorse if he neglects the least opportunity of enriching himself with the spiritual blessings dispensed by the saints.

His back became bent like the back of a wine-jar, the brows 2075
over his eyes like a crupper-strap

His charming soul-refreshing voice became ugly and worth nothing to any one

The tone that had (once) been the envy of Zuhra (Venus) was now like the bray of an old donkey

Truly, what fair thing is there that did not become foul, or what roof that did not become a carpet?—

Except the voices of holy men in their breasts, from the repercussion of whose breath is the blast of the trumpet (of Resurrection)

(Theirs is) the heart by which (all) hearts are made drunken, 2080
(theirs is) the non-existence whereby these existences of ours are made existent

He (the saint) is the amber (magnet) of (all) thought and of every voice, he is the (inward) delight of revelation and inspiration and (Divine) mystery

When the minstrel grew older and feeble, through not earning (anything) he became indebted for a single loaf of bread

He said, "Thou hast given me long life and respite O God, Thou hast bestowed (many) favours on a vile wretch

For seventy years I have been committing sin, (yet) not for one day hast Thou withheld Thy bounty from me

I (can) earn nothing to-day I am Thy guest, I will play the 2085
harp for Thee, I am Thine"

He took up his harp and went in search of God to the graveyard of Medina, crying "Alas!"

He said, "I crave of God the price of silk (for harpstrings), for He in His kindness accepts adulterated coin"

He played the harp a long while and (then), weeping, laid his head down he made the harp his pillow and dropped on a tomb

Sleep overtook him the bird, his soul, escaped from captivity, it let harp and harper go and darted away

It became freed from the body and the pain of this world in 2090
the simple (purely spiritual) world and the vast region of the soul

There his soul was singing what had befallen (it), saying, "If they would but let me stay here,

Happy would be my soul in this garden and springtide, drunken with this (far-stretching) plain and mystic anemone-field

Without head or foot I would be journeying, without lip or tooth I would be eating sugar

With a memory and thought free from brain-sickness, I would frolic with the dwellers in Heaven

With eye shut I would be seeing a (whole) world, without a 2095
hand I would be gathering roses and basil"

The water-bird (his soul) was plunged in a sea of honey—the fountain of Job, to drink and wash in,

Whereby Job, from his feet to the crown of his head, was purged of afflictions (and made pure) like the light of the sunrise

If the *Mathnawí* were as the sky in magnitude, not half the portion of this (mystery) would find room in it,

For the exceeding broad earth and sky (of the material world) caused my heart, from (their) narrowness (in comparison with the spiritual universe), to be rent in pieces,

2100 And this world that was revealed to me in this dream (of the minstrel) has spread wide my wings and pinions because of (its vast) expansion

If this world and the way to it were manifest, no one would remain *there* (in the material world) for a single moment

The (Divine) command was coming (to the minstrel)—"Nay, be not covetous inasmuch as the thorn is out of thy foot, depart"—

(Whilst) his soul was lingering there in the spacious demesne of His (God's) mercy and beneficence

How the heavenly voice spoke to 'Umar, may God be well-pleased with him, while he was asleep, saying, "Give a certain sum of gold from the public treasury to the man who is sleeping in the graveyard"

Then God sent such a drowsiness upon 'Umar that he was unable to keep himself from slumber

2105 He fell into amazement saying, "This is (a thing) unknown This has fallen from the Unseen, 'tis not without purpose"

He laid his head down, and slumber overtook him He dreamed that a voice came to him from God his spirit heard

That voice which is the origin of every cry and sound that indeed is the (only) voice, and the rest are echoes

Turcoman and Kurd and Persian-speaking man and Arab have understood that voice without (help of) ear or lip

Ay, (but) what of Turcomans, Persians, and Ethiopians? (Even) wood and stone have understood that voice

2110 Every moment there is coming from Him (the call), "*Am not I (your Lord)?*" and substance and accidents are becoming existent

If (the answer) "*Yea*" is not coming from them, yet their coming from non-existence (into existence) is (equivalent to) "*Yea*"

Listen to a goodly tale in explanation of what I have said concerning the friendliness (awareness) of stone and wood

How the moaning pillar complained when they made a pulpit for the Prophet, on whom be peace—for the multitude had become great, and said, "We do not see thy blessed face when thou art exhorting us"—and how the Prophet and his Companions heard that complaint, and how Muṣṭafá conversed with the pillar in clear language

The moaning pillar was complaining of (its) separation from the Prophet, just as rational beings (might do)

The Prophet said, "O pillar, what dost thou want?" It said, "My soul is turned to blood because of parting from thee

I was thy support (now) thou hast run away from me thou hast devised a place to lean against upon the pulpit"

"Dost thou desire," said he, "to be made a date-palm, (so that) the people of the East and the West shall gather fruit from thee?

Or that He (God) should make thee a cypress in yonder world, so that thou wilt remain everlastingly fresh and flourishing?"

It replied, "I desire that whereof the life is enduring for ever" Hearken, O heedless one! Be not thou less than a piece of wood!

He (the Prophet) buried that pillar in the earth, that it may be raised from the dead, like mankind, on the day of Resurrection,

That (hence) thou mayst know that every one whom God has called (to Himself) remains disengaged from all the work of this world

Whosoever hath his work and business from God, gains admission there and goes forth from (abandons worldly) work

He that hath no gift (portion) of spiritual mysteries, how should he believe in the complaining of inanimate things?

He says "Yes," not from his heart (but) for agreement's sake, lest people should say that he is a hypocrite (in his religion)

Unless there were knowers of the (Divine) command "Be!", this doctrine (that inanimate things are capable of speech) would have been rejected in the world

Myriads of conformists and legalists[1] are cast into the abyss (of destruction) by a single taint (of doubt),

For their conformity and their drawing evidence from logical proofs and all their wings and wing-feathers (every means which they employ in order to arrive at the truth) depend on opinion

The vile Devil raises a doubt (in their minds) all these blind ones fall in headlong

The leg of the syllogisers is of wood a wooden leg is very infirm,

[1] Literally, "followers of signs (external evidences)"

Unlike the Quṭb (supreme saint) of the age, the possessor of (spiritual) vision, by whose steadfastness the mountain is made giddy-headed (amazed)

2130 The blind man's leg is a staff, a staff, so that he may not fall headlong on the pebbles

The cavalier that became (the cause of) victory for the army, who is he for (the army of) the religious? One possessed of (spiritual) sight

If, with (the aid of) a staff, the blind have seen their way, (yet only) under the protection of (other) people are they clear-sighted

Were there no men of vision and (spiritual) kings, all the blind in the world would be dead

From the blind comes neither sowing nor reaping nor cultivation nor tradings and profit

2135 If He (God) did not bestow mercy and grace upon you, the wood of your logical deduction would break

What is this staff? Inferences and (logical) demonstration Who gave them (the blind) that staff? The all-seeing and almighty One

Since the staff has become a weapon of quarrel and attack, break that staff to pieces, O blind man!

He gave you the staff that ye might approach (Him) with that staff ye struck even at Him in your anger

O company of the blind, what are ye doing? Bring the seer between (you and God)![1]

2140 Lay hold of His skirt who gave thee the staff consider what (dreadful) things Adam suffered from disobedience

Consider the miracles of Moses and Ahmad (Mohammed), how the staff became a serpent and the pillar was endowed with knowledge

From the staff (came) a serpent and from the pillar a moaning they (the staff and the pillar) are beating (the drums of honour) five times daily for the sake of the Religion[2]

Unless this savour (perception of spiritual truths) were non-intellectual, how should all these miracles have been necessary?

Whatever is intelligible, the intellect is swallowing (receiving) it without the evidence of miracles and without contention

2145 This virgin (untrodden) Way deem unintelligible, deem (it) accepted in the heart of every fortunate (elect) one

As in fear of Adam devil and wild beast fled to the islands, from envy,

So in fear of the miracles of the prophets have the sceptics slunk away under the grass,

[1] *I.e.* 'seek access to God by means of the seer'

[2] *I.e.* these miracles are a perpetual proclamation of the sovereignty of the true Religion

That they may live in hypocrisy with the reputation of being Moslems, and that you may not know who they are

Like counterfeiters, they smear the base coin with silver and (inscribe on it) the name of the King

The outward form of their words is profession of the Divine Unity and the religion (of Islam) the inward meaning thereof is like darnel (?) seed in bread

The philosopher has not the stomach[1] (courage) to breathe a word if he utter a word, the true Religion will confound him

His hand and foot are inanimate, and whatever his spirit says (commands), those two are under its control

Albeit they (the sceptics) propound (reasons for) suspicion with their tongues, their hands and feet give testimony (against them)

How the Prophet, on whom be peace, manifested a miracle by the speaking of the gravel in the hand of Abú Jahl—God's curse on him!—and by the gravel's bearing witness to the truth of Mohammed, on whom be God's blessing and peace

There were some pebbles in the hand of Bú Jahl "O Ahmad," said he, "tell quickly what this is

If thou art the Messenger (of God), what is hidden in my fist? (Speak), since thou hast knowledge of the mysteries of Heaven "

He said, "How dost thou wish (me to do)? Shall I say what those (hidden) things are, or shall they declare that I am truthful and right?"

Bú Jahl said, "This second (thing) is more extraordinary " "Yes," said the Prophet, "(but) God hath greater power than that "

Without delay, from the middle of his (closed) fist every pebble began to pronounce the (Moslem's) profession of faith

Each said, "*There is no god*" and (each) said, "*except Allah*", (each) threaded the pearl of "*Ahmad is the Messenger of Allah*"

When Bú Jahl heard this from the pebbles, in his anger he dashed those pebbles on the ground

The rest of the story of the minstrel, and how the Commander of the Faithful, 'Umar, may God be well-pleased with him, conveyed to him the message spoken by the heavenly voice

Turn back and hear the plight of the minstrel, for the minstrel had (now) become desperate from waiting (so long)

The voice (of God) came to 'Umar, saying, "O 'Umar, redeem Our servant from want

[1] Literally, "the gall-bladder "

We have a servant, a favourite and highly esteemed one· take the trouble to go on foot to the graveyard

O 'Umar, spring up and put in thy hand full seven hundred dinárs from the public treasury

2165 Carry them to him (and say), 'O thou who art Our choice, accept this sum now and excuse (Us for offering such a small gift)

Spend this amount on the price (purchase) of silk when it is spent, come here (again) ' "

Then 'Umar in awe of that voice sprang up that he might gird his loins for this service

'Umar set his face towards the graveyard with the purse under his arm, running in search (of God's favourite)

Long did he run round about the graveyard no one was there but that poor old man

2170 He said, "This is not he," and ran once more He became tired out and saw none but the old man

He said, "God said, 'We have a servant he is a pure and worthy and blessed one '

How should an old harper be the chosen of God? O Hidden Mystery, how excellent, how excellent art Thou!"

Once again he wandered about the graveyard, like the hunting lion about the desert

When it became certain to him that none was there except the old man, he said, "Many an illumined heart is (to be found) in darkness "

2175 He came and sat down there (beside him) with a hundred marks of respect 'Umar happened to sneeze, and the old man sprang to his feet

He saw 'Umar and stood fixed in amazement he resolved to go and began to tremble (with fear)

He said within himself, "O God, help, I beseech thee! The Inspector has fallen upon a poor old harper "

When 'Umar looked on the old man's countenance, he saw him ashamed and pale

Then 'Umar said to him, "Fear not, do not flee from me, for I have brought thee glad tidings from God

2180 How often has God praised thy disposition, so that He has made 'Umar in love with thy face!

Sit down beside me and do not make separation (between us), that I may say into thine ear the secret (message) from (the Divine) favour

God sends thee greeting and asks thee how thou farest in thy distress and boundless sorrows

Lo here are some pieces of gold to pay for silk Spend them and come back to this place "

The old man heard this, trembling all over and biting his hand and tearing his garment,

Crying, "O God who hast no like!" inasmuch as the poor old man was melted[1] with shame 2185

After he had wept long and his grief had gone beyond (all) bounds, he dashed his harp on the earth and broke it to bits

He said, "O thou (harp) that hast been to me a curtain (debarring me) from God, O thou (that hast been) to me a brigand (cutting me off) from the King's highway,

O thou that hast drunk my blood for seventy years, O thou because of whom my face is black (disgraced) before (the Divine) perfection!

Have mercy, O bounteous God who keepest faith, on a life passed in iniquity!

God gave (me) a life, the value of every single day whereof none knoweth except Him 2190

I have spent my life, breath by breath I have breathed it all away in treble and bass

Ah me, that in minding the (musical) mode and rhythm of 'Iraq the bitter moment of parting (from this world) went out of my mind (was forgotten)

Alas that from the liquid freshness of the minor *zirafgand* the seed sown in my heart dried up, and my heart died

Alas that from (my preoccupation with) the sound of these four-and-twenty (melodies) the caravan passed and the day grew late"

O God, help (me) against this (self of mine) that is seeking help (from Thee) I seek justice (redress) from no one (else, but only) from this justice-seeking (self) 2195

I shall not get justice for myself from any one except, surely, from Him who is nearer to me than I,

For this "I-hood" comes to me from Him moment by moment therefore when this has failed me, I see (only) Him,

As (when you are with) one who is counting out gold to you, you keep your gaze (directed) towards him, not towards yourself

How 'Umar, may God be well-pleased with him, bade him (the harper) turn his gaze from the stage of weeping, which is (self-) existence, to the stage of absorption (in God), which is non-existence (of self)

Then 'Umar said to him, "This wailing of thine is also (one of) the marks of thy sobriety (self-consciousness)

The way of him that has passed away (from self-consciousness) is another way, because sobriety is another sin 2200

Sobriety exists (arises) from recollection of what is past past and future are to thee a curtain (separating thee) from God

[1] Literally, "became water"

Cast fire on them both how long, because of these twain, wilt thou be full of knots (joints) like a reed?

Whilst the reed is knotted, it is not a sharer of secrets it is not the companion of the (flute-player's) lip and voice

When thou art (engaged) in going about (seeking God) thou art indeed wrapped in (thy) going about[1] when thou hast come home, thou art still with thyself (self-conscious)

2205 O thou whose knowledge is without knowledge of the Giver of knowledge, thy repentance is worse than thy sin

O thou that seekest to repent of a state that is past, say, when wilt thou repent of this repentance?

At one time thou turnest to the (low) sound of the treble, at another thou dost kiss (art in love with) weeping and wailing "

When Fáruq ('Umar) became a reflector of mysteries, the old man's heart was awakened from within

He became without weeping or laughter, like the soul his (animal) soul departed and the other soul came to life

2210 In that hour such a bewilderment arose within him that he went forth from earth and heaven—

A seeking and searching beyond (all) seeking and search I know not (how to describe it), (if) you know, tell!

Words and feelings beyond (all) feelings and words—he had become drowned in the beauty of the Lord of majesty,

Drowned, not in such wise that there should be for him any deliverance, or that any one should know him except the (Divine) Ocean

Partial reason would not be telling of (the mysteries of) the Universal (Reason), if there were not demand after demand (perpetual Divine impulses necessitating the manifestation of these mysteries)

2215 Since demand after demand is arriving, the waves of that Sea (Universal Reason) reach this place (the world of partial reason)

Now that the story of the old man's (spiritual) experiences has come to this point, the old man and his experiences have withdrawn behind the veil

The old man has shaken his skirt free from talk and speech half of the tale has remained in our mouth (has not been told)

It behoves (us), for the sake of procuring (such) delight and enjoyment, to gamble away (sacrifice) hundreds of thousands of souls (lives)

In chase of the spiritual forest be (as) a falcon, be one who gambles his soul (life) away, like the sun of this world

2220 The lofty sun is life-diffusing every moment it becomes empty and is filled

[1] *I e* ' thou art absorbed in thy search, not in God '

O Sun of Reality, diffuse spiritual life, show forth newness to this old world!

Soul and spirit are coming from the Unseen into human existence, like running water

Commentary on the prayer of the two angels who daily make proclamation in every market, saying, "O God, bestow on every prodigal some boon in exchange! O God, bestow on every niggard some bane (in return)", and an explanation that the prodigal is he that strives earnestly in the Way of God, not he that squanders his wealth in the way of sensuality

The Prophet said, "For admonishment's sake two angels are always making goodly proclamation,

Saying, 'O God, keep the prodigals fully satisfied, give hundred-thousandfold recompense for every dirhem that they spend

O God, do not give the niggards in this world anything but 2225
loss upon loss!'"

Oh, (there is) many an act of niggardliness that is better than prodigality do not bestow what belongs to God except by the command of God,

That thou mayst gain infinite treasure in return, and that thou mayst not be numbered among the infidels

Who were offering camels in sacrifice in order that their swords might prevail against Muṣṭafá

Endeavour to find out the command of God from one who is united (with God) not every heart understands the command of God,

As (for example) the slave, the enemy (of God), who did 2230
justice (in his own opinion, and) bestowed what belonged to the King upon those who rebelled against Him—

In the Qur'an there is warning to the heedless that all their spendings are a (cause of) bitter grief to them—

What increase does the equity and justice of this enemy produce in the sight of the King? Banishment and a black countenance (disgrace)

The chiefs of Mecca (when) at war with the Prophet offered sacrifice in hope of (Divine) favour

On this account the true believer is saying in his prayer, from fear, "*Lead (us) in the right path!*"

It beseems the generous man thus to give money, (but) verily 2235
the generosity of the lover is the surrender of his soul (life)

If you give bread for God's sake, you will be given bread (in return), if you give your life for God's sake, you will be given life (in return)

If the leaves of this plane-tree drop off, the Creator will bestow on it the provision of leaflessness (spiritual poverty)

If because of your liberality no wealth remains in your hand, how should the bounty of God let you be down-trodden?

When any one sows, his barn becomes empty (of seed), but there is goodliness in his cornfield,

And, if he leaves it (the seed) in the barn and saves it up, weevils and mice and calamities (of time and decay) devour it

This world is negation (of reality) seek (reality) in affirmation (of God) Your form (body) is void (of reality) seek in your essence

Bring the briny bitter (animal) soul to the sword buy the (heavenly) soul that is like a great sweet river

And if you cannot become (one of the frequenters) of this threshold (sublime court), at least hear from me the following tale

The story of the Caliph who in his time surpassed Hátim of Tayyi' in generosity and had no rival

In former days there was a Caliph who made Hátim the slave of his liberality

He had raised high the banner of munificence and largesse, he had removed poverty and want from the world

He was a sea of pearls, pure bounty his largesse reached from Qáf to Qáf

In this world of dust he was the cloud and the rain he was the centre wherein the bounty of the Giver of all displayed itself

His gifts caused sea and mine to quake (tremble with shame) caravan on caravan (were hastening) towards his liberality

His gate and portal was the point to which Need turned the fame of his munificence had gone (far and wide) into the world

Persians and Greeks, Turcomans and Arabs, were lost in amazement at his liberality and generosity

He was the Water of Life and the Ocean of Bounty by him both Arabs and foreigners were revived

Story of the poor Arab of the desert and his wife's altercation with him because of (their) penury and poverty

One night a Bedouin woman said to her husband—and she carried (her) talk beyond bounds—

"We are suffering all this poverty and hardship all the world are (living) in happiness, we (alone) are unhappy

We have no bread, our (only) condiment is anguish and envy we have no jug, our (only) water is the tears (that flow) from our eyes

Our garment by day is the burning sunshine, at night our bed and coverlet is (made) of the moonbeams

We fancy the disk of the moon is a disk (round cake) of bread and lift up our hands towards the sky.

The (poorest of the) poor feel shame at our poverty day is turned to night (darkened) by our anxiety about our daily portion (of food)

Kinsfolk and strangers have come to flee from us in like fashion as Sámirí from men

If I beg a handful of lentils from some one, he says to me, 'Be silent, O death and plague!'

The Arabs take pride in fighting and giving thou amongst the Arabs art like a fault in writing

What fighting (can we do)? We are killed without fighting, we are made giddy (utterly distracted) by the sword of want

What gifts (can we make)? We are continually in beggary, we are slitting the vein of (slaughtering) the gnat in the air

If any guest arrive, if I am I (as sure as I am living) I will go for his tattered cloak when he falls asleep at night

How disciples (novices in Súfism) are beguiled in their need by false impostors and imagine them to be Shaykhs and venerable personages and (saints) united (with God), and do not know the difference between fact (naqd) *and fiction* (naql) *and between what is tied on (artificially) and what has grown up (naturally)*

For this reason the wise have said with knowledge, 'One must become the guest of those who confer benefits '

Thou art the disciple and guest of one who, from his vileness, robs thee of all thou hast

He is not strong how should he make thee strong? He does not give light, (nay) he makes thee dark

Since he had no light (in himself), how in association (with him) should others obtain light from him?

(He is) like the half-blind healer of eyes what should he put in (people's) eyes except wool?

Such is our state in poverty and affliction. may no guest be beguiled by us!

If thou hast never seen a ten years' famine in (visible) forms, open thine eyes and look at us

Our outward appearance is like the inward reality of the impostor darkness in his heart, his tongue flashy (plausible)

He has no scent or trace of God, (but) his pretension is greater than (that of) Seth and the Father of mankind (Adam)

The Devil (is so ashamed of him that he) has not shown to him even his portrait, (yet) he (the impostor) is saying, 'We are of the *Abdál*[1] and are more (we are superior even to them) '

[1] See p 18, note 1

He has stolen many an expression used by dervishes, in order that he himself may be thought to be a (holy) personage

In his talk he cavils at Báyazíd, (although) Yazíd would be ashamed of his existence

(He is) without (any) portion of the bread and viands of Heaven God did not throw a single bone to him

He has proclaimed, 'I have laid out the dishes, I am the Vicar of God, I am the son of the (spiritual) Khalífa

Welcome (to the feast), O simple-hearted ones, tormented (with hunger), that from my bounteous table ye may eat your fill'—of nothing

Some persons, (relying) on the promise of 'To-morrow,' have wandered for years around that door, (but) 'To-morrow' never comes

It needs a long time for the inmost conscience of a man to become evident, more and less (both in great and small matters),

(So that we may know whether) beneath the wall of his body there is treasure, or whether there is the house of snake and ant and dragon

When it became clear that he was naught (worthless), (by that time) the life of the seeker (disciple) had passed what use (was) the knowledge (to him)?

Explaining how it may happen, (though) rarely, that a disciple sincerely puts his faith in a false impostor (and believes) that he is a (holy) personage, and by means of this faith attains unto a (spiritual) degree which his Shaykh has never (even) dreamed of, and (then) fire and water do him no hurt, though they hurt his Shaykh, but this occurs very seldom

But exceptionally comes (the case of) a disciple to whom, because of his (spiritual) illumination, that falsehood (of the impostor) is beneficial

He, by his goodly purpose, attains unto a (high) degree, although he fancied (the impostor to be) soul, and that (soul) proved to be (only) body

(It is) like trying to find the *qibla* in the heart (depth) of night the *qibla* is not (found), but his (the seeker's) prayer is valid

The impostor has a dearth of soul within, but we have a dearth of bread without

Why should we conceal (our poverty) like the impostor and suffer agony for the sake of false reputation?"

How the Bedouin bade his wife be patient and declared to her the excellence of patience and poverty

Her husband said to her, "How long wilt thou seek income and seed-produce? What indeed is left of (our) life? Most (of it) is past

The sensible man does not look at increase or deficiency, because both (these) will pass by like a torrent

Whether it (life) be pure (clear and untroubled) or whether it be a turbid flood, do not speak of it, since it is not enduring for a moment

In this world thousands of animals are living happily, without up and down (anxiety)

The dove on the tree is uttering thanks to God, though her food for the night is not (yet) ready

The nightingale is singing glory to God (and saying), 'I rely on Thee for my daily bread, O Thou who answerest (prayer)'

The falcon has made the king's hand his joy (the place in which he takes delight), and has given up hope of (has become indifferent to) all carrion

Similarly you may take (every animal) from the gnat to the elephant they all have become God's family (dependent on Him for their nourishment), and what an excellent nourisher is God!

All these griefs that are within our breasts arise from the vapour and dust of our existence and wind (vain desire)

These uprooting griefs are as a scythe to us (to think that) this is such and such or that that is such and such is a temptation (of the Devil) to us[1]

Know that every pain is a piece of Death expel (that) part of Death from thee, if there be a means (of doing so)

When thou canst not flee from the part of Death, know that the whole of it will be poured upon thy head

If the part of Death has become sweet to thee, know that God will make the whole sweet

Pains are coming from Death as (his) messengers do not avert thy face from his messenger, O foolish one!

Whoever lives sweetly (pleasantly) dies bitterly (painfully) whoever serves his body does not save his soul

Sheep are driven from the plains (to the town) the fatter they are, the quicker they are killed

The night is past and dawn is come O my soul, how long wilt thou take up (again) the tale of gold from the beginning[2]?

Thou wert young (once), and (then) thou wert more contented (now) thou hast become a seeker of gold, (but) at first thou wert gold indeed (precious and perfect)

[1] *I e* "we ought not to complain of our lot but put our trust in God"
[2] *I e* "how long will you begin again and again to talk about money?"

Thou wert a fruitful vine: how hast thou become unsaleable (worthless)? How hast thou become rotten when thy fruit is ripening?

Thy fruit ought to become sweeter and not move farther backwards like rope-makers[1].

Thou art my wife: the wife must be of the same quality (as the husband) in order that things may go rightly.

The married pair must match one another: look at a pair of shoes or boots.

If one of the shoes is too tight for the foot, the pair of them is of no use to thee.

Hast thou ever seen one leaf of a (folding) door small and the other large, or a wolf mated with the lion of the jungle?

A pair of sacks on a camel do not balance properly when one is small and the other of full size.

I march with stout heart towards contentment: why art thou betaking thyself to revilement?"

In this fashion the contented man, moved by sincerity and ardour, was talking to his wife till daybreak.

How the wife counselled her husband, saying, "Don't talk any more about thy merit and (spiritual) rank—'why say ye that which ye do not?'—*for although these words are true, yet thou hast not attained to the degree of trust in God, and to speak thus above thy station and devotional practice is harmful and* 'exceedingly hateful in the sight of God.'"

The wife cried out at him, saying, "O thou who makest reputation thy religion, I will not swallow thy spells (deceiving speeches) any more.

Don't talk nonsense in thy presumption and pretension: begone, don't speak from pride and arrogance.

How long (wilt thou utter) pompous and artificial phrases? Look at thine own acts and feelings and be ashamed!

Pride is ugly, and in beggars (all the) more ugly: (it is like) wet clothes after a cold snowy day[2].

How long (this) pretension and palaver and bluster[3], O thou whose house is (frail) as the house of the spider?

When hast thou illumined thy soul by contentment? Of contentment thou hast learned (only) the name.

The Prophet said, 'What is contentment? A treasure.' Thou canst not distinguish the gain from the pain.

This contentment is the soul's treasure: do not thou boast (of possessing it), O (thou who art) grief and pain to my soul.

[1] *I.e.* retrogress and deteriorate.
[2] Literally, "The day cold and snow—and then the clothes wet!"
[3] Literally, "wind of the moustache."

Don't call me thy mate, don't flap so much[1] I am the mate of justice, I am not the mate of fraud

How art thou walking (consorting) with amír and bey, when thou art slitting the veins of (killing for food) the locust in the air?

Thou art contending with dogs for the sake of a bone, thou art wailing like an empty-bellied reed-pipe

Don't look at me dully (coldly) with contempt, lest I tell (others) what is in thy veins (disclose thy hidden faults)

Thou hast deemed thy understanding superior to mine, (but) how hast thou (truly) seen me, who am deficient in understanding?

Don't spring upon me like a reckless wolf! Oh, better be without understanding (mad) than (suffer) the disgrace of (having) thy understanding

Since thy understanding is a shackle for mankind, it is not understanding it is a snake and scorpion

May God be the enemy of thy iniquity and deceit! May the deceitfulness of thy understanding fall short of (fail to injure) us!

Thou art both the snake and the charmer—oh, wonderful! Thou art (both) the snake-catcher and the snake, O thou disgrace to the Arabs!

If the crow knew its ugliness, from grief and sorrow it would melt like snow

The charmer chants (a spell) as an enemy (does), he is (casting) a spell upon the snake and the snake is (casting) a spell upon him

If his trap were not (devised by him as) a spell for the snake (a means of catching it), how would he become a prey to the snake's spell?

The charmer, from greed and (desire of) getting and making (money), is not conscious of the snake's spell at the time

The snake says, 'O charmer, beware, beware! Thou hast beheld thine own spell (and its effect upon me) now behold mine!

Thou beguilest me with the Name of God in order that thou mayst expose me to shame and confusion

The Name of God enthralled me, not thy contrivance thou madest the Name of God a trap woe to thee!

The Name of God will take vengeance from thee on my behalf I commit my soul and body to the Name of God

Either it will sever the vein of thy life by my stroke, or it will bring thee into a prison as (it has brought) me'"

Rough speeches of this sort, (whole) volumes, the woman recited to her youthful husband

[1] *I e* "don t make such a show of affection"

How the man counselled his wife, saying, "Do not look with contempt on the poor, but regard the work of God as perfect, and do not let thy vain thought and opinion of thine own penury cause thee to sneer at poverty and revile the poor"

"O woman," said he, "art thou a woman or the father of sorrow? Poverty is (my) pride, and do not thou beat me on the head (lash me with thy reproaches)

Wealth and gold are as a cap to the head 'tis the bald man that makes a shelter of his cap,

(But) he that has curly and beautiful locks is happier when his cap is gone

The man of God (the saint) resembles the eye therefore (his) sight is better bare (unveiled) than covered

When a slave-dealer offers (slaves) for sale, he removes from the (sound) slave the garment that hides defects

But if there be any defect, how should he strip (the slave)? Nay, he tricks him (the purchaser) by means of the garment

'This one,' says he, 'is ashamed of good and evil stripping him would cause him to run away from thee'

The (rich) merchant is plunged in vice up to the ears, (but) the merchant has money, and his money covers his vice,

For because of cupidity none that is covetous sees his vice feelings of cupidity are a bond uniting (men's) hearts,

And if a beggar speak a word like the (pure) gold of the mine, his wares will not find the way to the shop

The affair of (spiritual) poverty is beyond thy apprehension do not look on poverty with contempt,

Because dervishes are beyond property and wealth they possess an abundant portion from the Almighty

The High God is just, and how should the just behave tyrannously to the dispirited (poor and weak)?

(How should they) give fortune and goods to that one, while they put this one on the fire?

The fire burns him because he hath this (evil) thought about the Lord who created both worlds

Is (the saying) 'Poverty is my pride' vain and false? No, 'tis thousands of hidden glories and disdains

Thou in anger hast poured nicknames on me thou hast called me a catcher (deceiver) of friends and a catcher of snakes

If I catch the snake, I extract its fangs in order that I may save it from having its head crushed

Because those fangs are an enemy to its life, I am making the enemy a friend by means of this skill

Never do I chant my spell from (motives of) cupidity I have turned this cupidity upside down (I have entirely vanquished it)

God forbid! I desire nothing from created beings: through contentment there is a (whole) world within my heart.

Thou, (sitting) on the top of the pear-tree[1], seest (things) like that: come down from it, that the (evil) thought may not continue.

When thou turnest round and round and becomest giddy, thou seest the house turning round, and 'tis thou (thyself) art that (revolving object).

Explaining how every one's movement (action) proceeds from the place where he is, (so that) he sees every one (else) from the circle of his own self-existence: a blue glass shows the sun as blue, a red glass as red, (but) when the glass escapes from (the sphere of) colour, it becomes white, (and then) it is more truthful than all other glasses and is the Imam (exemplar to them all).

Abú Jahl saw Ahmad (Mohammed) and said, ''Tis an ugly figure that has sprung from the sons of Háshim!'

Ahmad said to him, 'Thou art right, thou hast spoken truth, although thou art impertinent.'

The Siddíq (Abu Bakr) saw him and said, 'O Sun, thou art neither of East nor of West: shine beauteously!'

Ahmad said, 'Thou hast spoken the truth, O dear friend, O thou that hast escaped from this world of nothingness.'

They that were present said, 'O king, why didst thou call both of them truth-tellers when they contradicted each other?'

He replied, 'I am a mirror polished by the (Divine) hand: Turcoman and Indian behold in me that which exists (in themselves).'

O wife, if thou deemest me very covetous, rise above this womanish care (for worldly things).

This (state of mine) resembles cupidity and (in reality) it is a (Divine) mercy: where that (spiritual) blessing is, where is cupidity?

Make trial of poverty for a day or two, that thou mayst see (find) in poverty double riches.

Have patience with poverty and abandon this disgust, because in poverty there is the light of the Lord of glory.

Do not look sour[2], and (thou wilt) see thousands of souls plunged, through contentment, in an ocean of honey.

Behold hundreds of thousands of bitterly suffering souls steeped in rose-syrup, like the rose.

Oh, alas, would that thou hadst comprehension, so that the unfolded tale of my heart might be shown forth to thee from my soul.

[1] Alluding to a story told in Book IV, 3548 foll.
[2] Literally, 'do not sell vinegar.'

This discourse is milk in the teat of the soul it will not flow well without some one to suck (the teat)

When the hearer has become thirsty and craving, the preacher, (even) if he be (as good as) dead, becomes eloquent

When the hearer is fresh and without fatigue (not bored), the dumb and mute will find a hundred tongues to speak withal

When a stranger comes in at my door, the women of the harem hide themselves in the veil,

But if a harmless relative should come in, those covered ones will lift up their face-veils

Everything that is made beautiful and fair and lovely is made (so) for the eye of him that sees

How should the sound of melody and treble and bass be (made) for the insentient ear of one who is deaf?

Not in vain did God make musk fragrant He made it (so) for the sense (of smell), He did not make it for one whose nostrils are stopped (by disease)

God hath fashioned the earth and the sky, He hath raised in the midst much fire and light

(He made) this earth for those (created) of clay, (He made) heaven to be the abode of the celestials

The low (base) man is the enemy of what is high the purchaser (seeker) of each place (Heaven or Hell) is manifest (made known by his actions)

O chaste woman, hast thou ever risen up and decked thyself for the sake of him that is blind?

If I should fill the world with hidden pearls (of wisdom), how should I fare (what good would it do me), since they are not thy portion (since thou art unfit to receive them)?

O wife, take leave of quarrelling and waylaying, and if thou wilt not, (then) take leave of me!

What room have I for quarrelling with the good or the bad? —for this heart of mine is recoiling (even) from acts of peace

If thou keep silence, ('tis well), and if not, I will so do that at this very moment I will leave my house and home "

How the wife paid regard to her husband and begged God to forgive her for what she had said

When the wife saw that he was fierce and unmanageable, she began to weep tears in sooth are a woman's lure

She said, "When did I imagine such (words) from thee? I hoped of thee something different "

The wife approached by the way of self-naughting (self-abasement) "I am thy dust," said she, "not (worthy to be) thy lady-wife

Body and soul and all I am is thine the entire authority and command belongs to thee

If because of poverty my heart has lost patience[1], it is not for my own sake, but for thine

Thou hast been my remedy in afflictions I am unwilling that thou shouldst be penniless

On my soul and conscience, this is not for my own sake. this wailing and moaning is on account of thee

(I swear) by God that at every moment my self would fain die for thy self before thee

Would that thy soul, to which my soul is devoted, were aware of my soul's inmost thoughts!

Inasmuch as thou hast such (an ill) opinion of me, I am grown weary both of soul and of body

I cast earth on (renounce) silver and gold, since thou behavest thus to me, O comfort of my soul

Thou who dwellest in my soul and heart, wilt thou declare thyself to be quit of me for this (small) amount (of offence)?

Be quit (then)! for thou hast the power, (but) oh, my soul pleads against thy making this declaration

Remember the time when I was (beautiful) as the idol, and thou (adoring) as the idolater

Thy slave has kindled her heart (in eagerness) to comply with thee whatever thou callest 'cooked,' she says it is 'burnt[2]'

Whatever thou mayst cook me with, I am thy spinach[3] whether (thou art) sour broth (to me) or sweet, thou art worthy (of my affection)

I uttered infidelity (blasphemy) lo, I have returned to the true faith, I am come (to submit) with all my soul to thy command

I did not know thy kingly nature, I rudely urged my beast (intruded) before thee

Since I have made (for myself) a lamp of thy forgiveness, I repent, I cast away (abandon) opposition

I am laying before thee sword and winding-sheet I am bending my neck towards thee smite!

Thou art talking of bitter separation (from me) do whatever thou wilt, but do not this

Thy conscience within thee is a pleader on my behalf, it is a perpetual intercessor with thee in my absence

What pleads within thee for me is thy (noble) nature from reliance on it my heart sought (to) sin (against thee)

Have mercy, unbeknown to thyself (without any self-conceit), O angry one, O thou whose nature is better than a hundred maunds of honey"

[1] Literally, "sprang away from patience"
[2] *I e* "she outdoes you in ardour"
[3] *I e* "it matters not how you treat me I am devotedly attached to you

In this fashion was she speaking graciously and winningly meanwhile a (fit of) weeping came upon her

When the tears and sobs passed beyond bounds—from her who was fascinating even without tears—

2420 There appeared from that rain a lightning-flash (that) shot a spark of fire into the heart of the lonely man

She by whose beauteous face man was enslaved, how will it be when she begins to play the (humble) slave?

She at whose haughtiness thy heart is trembling, how wilt thou fare when she falls a-weeping before thee?

She from whose disdain thy heart and soul are bleeding, how will it be when she turns to entreaty?

She in whose tyranny and cruelty we are snared, what plea shall we have when she rises to plead?

2425 (*The love of desired things, women, etc*) *is decked out for men* (made attractive to them) God has arranged it how can they escape from what God has arranged?

Inasmuch as He created her (the woman) *that he* (Adam) *might take comfort in her*, how can Adam be parted from Eve?

Though he (the husband) be Rustam son of Zál and greater than Hamza (in valour), as regards authority he is his old woman's (his wife's) captive

He (the Prophet), to whose words the (whole) world was enslaved (obedient), used to cry, "Speak to me, O Humayrá!"

The water prevailed over (extinguished) the fire by its dread onset, (but) the fire makes it seethe when it (the water) is screened (hidden in the cauldron)

2430 When a cauldron comes between (them), O king[1], it (the fire) annihilates the water and converts it into air

If outwardly thou art dominating thy wife, like the (fire-quenching) water, (yet) inwardly thou art dominated and art seeking (the love of) thy wife

This is characteristic of Man (alone) to the (other) animals love is wanting, and that (want of love) arises from (their) inferiority (to Man)

Explanation of the Tradition, "Verily, they (women) prevail over the wise man, and the ignorant man prevails over them"

The Prophet said that woman prevails exceedingly over the wise and intelligent,

(While), on the other hand, ignorant men prevail over woman, for in them the fierceness of the animal is imprisoned

2435 They lack tenderness, kindness, and affection, because animality predominates over their (human) nature

[1] The reader is addressed

Love and tenderness are human qualities, anger and lust are animal qualities

She (woman) is a ray of God, she is not that (earthly) beloved she is creative, you might say she is not created

How the man yielded to his wife's request that he should seek the means of livelihood, and regarded her opposition (to him) as a Divine indication (Verse)
To the mind of every knowing man it is a fact that with the revolving object there is one that causes it to revolve

The man became as sorry for that speech (of his) as at the hour of death a tyrannical officer (is sorry) for his tyranny

He said, "How did I become the adversary of (her who is) the life of my soul? How did I bestow kicks on the head of my soul?"

When the (Divine) destiny comes, it muffles the sight, so that our intellect cannot distinguish foot from head

As soon as the destiny is past, it (the intellect) devours itself (with grief) rending the veil (without regard for appearances), it tears its bosom

The man said, "O wife, I am repenting if I have been an infidel, I will (now) become a Moslem

I am a sinner against thee have mercy, do not dig me up all at once from root and foundation (do not bring me to utter ruin)"

If the old infidel is repenting, he becomes a Moslem when he pleads for pardon

He (God) is the merciful and bountiful Lord both existence and non-existence are in love with Him

(Both) infidelity and faith are lovers of that Majesty, both copper and silver are slaves to that Elixir

Explaining that both Moses and Pharaoh are subject to the Divine Will, like antidote and poison and darkness and light, and how Pharaoh conversed in solitude with God, praying that He would not destroy his (good) reputation

Moses and Pharaoh were servants (worshippers) of Reality, (though) outwardly the former keeps the way (is rightly guided), while the latter has lost the way

In the daytime Moses was making lament (supplication) to God at midnight Pharaoh would begin to weep,

Saying, "O God, what shackle is this on my neck? Were it not for the shackle, who would say 'I am I'?

By that (will) whereby Thou hast made Moses to be illumined, by that (same will) Thou hast made me to be darkened,

By that whereby Thou hast made Moses' face like the moon Thou hast made the moon of my soul to be black-faced (eclipsed)

My star was not better than a moon (so that it should be exempt from eclipse) since it has suffered eclipse, what help have I?

If they beat drums in my honour (proclaiming me) as Lord and Sultan, ('tis like as when) the moon is eclipsed and the people beat bowls (of metal)

They beat those bowls and raise a clamour they put the moon to shame by their blows

2455 I, who am Pharaoh, oh, woe is me because of (what is being done by) the people my (title of) 'My supreme Lord' is (like) the blows on the bowl (since it proclaims my eclipse)

We (Moses and I) are fellow-servants (to Thee), but Thy axe is cleaving the sappy boughs in Thy forest,

Then it makes one bough to be firmly planted, another bough to be left uncared for

The bough has no power against the axe no bough escaped from the power of the axe

(I entreat Thee) by the truth of the might which belongs to Thy axe, do Thou graciously make these crooked (perverse) actions (of ours) straight (righteous) "

2460 Once more Pharaoh said to himself, "Oh, wonderful! Am not I (occupied) the whole night in (crying) 'O our Lord'?

In secret I am growing humble and harmonious when I reach Moses, how am I becoming (so different)?

The colour (gilt) of base gold is (laid on) in ten coats how is it becoming black-faced in the presence of the fire?

Is it not (true) that my heart (spirit) and body are under His control, (so that) at one moment He makes me a kernel, at another moment a rind?

When He bids me be a cornfield, I become green, when He bids me be ugly, I become yellow

2465 At one moment He makes me a moon, at another black " How, indeed, is the action of God other than this?

Before the (blows of the) bat of His decree, "*Be, and it was*," we are running (like balls) in Space and beyond[1]

Since colourlessness (pure Unity) became the captive of colour (manifestation in the phenomenal world), a Moses came into conflict with a Moses

When you attain unto the colourlessness which you (originally) possessed, Moses and Pharaoh are at peace (with each other)

If it occurs to you to ask questions about this mystery, (I reply), how should (the world of) colour be devoid of contradiction?

2470 The marvel is that this colour arose from that which is colourless how did colour arise to war with the colourless?

[1] Literally, "in space and non-space

Inasmuch as oil has been formed (by God) from water, why have oil and water become opposites?

Since the rose springs from the thorn, and the thorn from the rose, why are both of them at war and (engaged) in recrimination?

Or is this not (really) war? Is it for (the Divine) purpose, (and is it) an artifice, like the bickering of those who sell asses?

Or is it neither this nor that? Is it bewilderment? The treasure must be sought and this (bewilderment) is the ruin (where it is hidden)

That which you imagine to be the treasure—through that vain imagination you are losing the treasure

Know that fancies and opinions are like the state of cultivation treasure is not (to be found) in cultivated spots

In the state of cultivation there is existence and strife (contrariety) the non-existent is ashamed of (all) existent things

It is not the case that the existent implored help against (sought to escape from) non-existence, nay, ('twas) the non-existent (that) repelled the existent

Do not say, "I am fleeing from the non-existent", nay, it is fleeing from you Stop! (Do not fancy yourself to be fleeing)

Outwardly it is calling you towards itself, but inwardly it is driving you away with the cudgel of rejection

O man of sound heart (mind), 'tis (a case of) reversed shoes[1] know that the rebelliousness of Pharaoh was (really) from (caused by) Moses[2]

The reason why the unblest are disappointed of both worlds, (according to the text) "he has lost this life and the life to come"

The wretched philosopher being firmly convinced that the sky is an egg and the earth like its yolk,

Some one asked him how this earth remains, in the midst of this surrounding expanse of sky,

Suspended in the air like a lamp, moving neither to the bottom nor to the top

The philosopher said to him, "It remains in the air because of the attraction exerted by the sky from (all) six directions

(The sky is) like a vault moulded (made) of lodestone (the earth like) a suspended piece of iron remains in the middle"

Said the other, "How should the pure sky draw the dark earth to itself?

Nay, it is repelling it (the earth) from (all) six directions

[1] *I e* a case in which the appearance is contrary to the reality

[2] *I e* it was the effect of the inward repudiation of Pharaoh by Moses, who was his opposite

hence it (the earth) remains (suspended) amidst the violent winds (currents)."

(Similarly), then, because of the repulsion exerted by the hearts of the perfect (saints), the spirits of Pharaohs remain in perdition.

2490 Therefore, through being rejected by this world and by that world, these lost ones have been left without either this or that.

If you turn away your head from the (holy) servants of the Almighty, know that they are disgusted by your existence.

They possess the amber: when they display it, they make the straw of your existence frenzied (with desire for it).

When they conceal their amber, they quickly make your submission (to God) rebellion (against Him).

That (position which you hold in relation to them) is like the stage of animality, which is captive and subject to (the stage of) humanity.

2495 Know that the stage of humanity is subject to the power of the saints as the animal (is subject to man), O master.

Ahmad (Mohammed) in righteousness called (the people of) the whole world his servants: read (the text), "*Say, O My servants.*"

Your intellect is like the camel-driver, and you are the camel: it drives you in every direction under its bitter control.[1]

The saints are the intellect of intellect, and (all) intellects (from the beginning) to the end are (under their control) like camels.

Come now, look upon them with (profound) consideration: there is (but) one guide, and a hundred thousand souls (following him).

2500 What is the guide and what the camel-driver? Get thee an eye that may behold the Sun!

Lo, the world has been left nailed fast in night, (while) day is waiting expectantly, depending on the sun.

Here is a sun hidden in a mote, a fierce lion in the fleece of a lamb.

Here is an ocean hidden beneath straw: beware, do not step on this straw with hesitancy.

(But) a feeling of hesitancy and doubt in the heart (of the foolish) is a Divine mercy in regard to the (spiritual) guide.

2505 Every prophet came alone into this world: he was alone, and (yet) he had a hundred unseen worlds within him.

By his power he enchanted the macrocosm (universe), he enfolded himself in a very small frame.[2]

The foolish deemed him to be lonely and weak: how is he weak who has become the King's companion?

The foolish said, "He is a man, nothing more": woe to him that recks not of the end!

[1] *I.e.* 'a control which you cannot avoid, whether you like it or not.'
[2] *I.e.* in the body of man, who is the microcosm.

How the eyes of (external) sense regarded Ṣalih and his she-camel as despicable and without a champion, (for) when God is about to destroy an army He makes their adversaries appear despicable and few in their sight, even though the adversary be superior in strength "and He was making you few in their eyes, that God might bring to pass a thing that was to be done"

The she-camel of Salih was in (outward) form a camel that bitter (graceless) tribe hamstrung (and slaughtered) her in their folly

When they became her foes on account of the water (which 2510
she shared with them), they were blind to bread and blind to water (ungrateful for the blessings of God)

God's she-camel drank water from brook and cloud they (really) withheld God's water from God

The she-camel of Salih became, like the bodies of righteous men, an ambush for the destruction of the wicked,

That (you may see) what (the Divine command), *Let God's she-camel have her portion of water*, wrought against that people, through the ordainment of death and woe

The vengeance, which is God's minister, demanded from them an entire town as the blood-price of a single camel

His (the prophet's or saint's) spirit is like Sálih, and his body 2515
is the she-camel the spirit is in union (with God), the body in want (distress)

The Sálih-spirit is not susceptible to afflictions the blows fall on the camel (body), not on the essence (spirit)

No one gains victory over their (the saints') hearts harm comes (only) to the oyster-shell, not to the pearl

The Sálih-spirit is not capable of being hurt the light of God is not subject to infidels

The Soul (God) attached to it (the spirit) the earthly body, that they (the infidels) might hurt (it) and suffer tribulation,

Not knowing that to hurt this (body) is to hurt (offend) Him 2520
the water in this jar is joined with the water in the river

God connected (the spirit) with a body, in order that he (the prophet or saint) might become a refuge for the whole world

Be a slave to the camel, which is the saint's body, that you may become the fellow-servant of the Sálih-spirit[1]

Sálih said (to the people of Thamud), "Inasmuch as ye have shown this envy, after three days the punishment will arrive from God

After three more days there will come from the Taker of life a calamity that hath three signs

The colour of all your faces will be changed, (they will be of) 2525
colours different to look at

[1] *I e* join the saint's spirit in worship of God.

On the first day your faces will be like saffron, on the second your faces will be red like *arghawán* (flowers of the Judas-tree)

On the third, all your faces will become black after that, the vengeance of God will arrive

If ye desire from me the sign of this threatened chastisement, the she-camel's foal has run towards the mountains

If ye can catch him, there is help (for you), else the bird of hope hath surely escaped from the snare "

2530 None was able to overtake the foal he went into the mountains and vanished

Sálih said, "Ye see, the (Divine) destiny has been ratified and has beheaded the phantom of your hope "

What is the she-camel's foal? His (the saint's) heart, which ye may bring back to its place (win again) by means of well-doing and piety

If his heart comes back (is reconciled), ye are saved from that (Divine punishment), otherwise ye are despairing and biting your fore-arms (in remorse)

When they heard this dark threat, they cast down their eyes and waited for it (to be fulfilled)

2535 On the first day they saw their faces yellow from despair they were sighing heavily

On the second day the faces of all became red the time for hope and repentance was (irretrievably) lost

On the third day all their faces became black the prediction of Ṣáliḥ came true without (possibility of) dispute

When they all were cast away (and plunged) in despair, they fell on their knees, like (crouching) birds

Gabriel, the trusted (angel), brought in the Qur'án the description of this kneeling, (which is described by the word) *játhimín*

2540 Do thou kneel at the time when they (the saints) are teaching thee and bidding thee dread such a kneeling as this

They (the people of Thamud) were waiting for the stroke of vengeance the vengeance came and annihilated this town

Ṣáliḥ went from his solitude to the town he beheld the town amidst (wrapt in) smoke and heat

He heard (the sound of) wailing from their limbs the lamentation was plain (to hear), those who uttered it (were) invisible

He heard wailings from their bones tears of blood (poured) from their spirits, like hailstones

2545 Ṣáliḥ heard that and set to weeping he began to lament for them that made lamentation

He said, "O people that lived in vanity, and on account of you I wept before God!

God said (to me), 'Have patience with their iniquity give them counsel, not much remains of their (allotted) period '

I said, 'Counsel is barred by ill-treatment the milk of counsel gushes forth from love and joy

Much ill-treatment have they bestowed on me, (so that) the milk of counsel is curdled in my veins '

God said to me, 'I will give thee a boon, I will lay a plaster on those wounds (of thine) ' 2550

God made my heart clear as the sky, He swept your oppression out of my mind

I went (back) once more to admonition, I spake parables and words (sweet) as sugar,

I produced fresh milk from the sugar, I mingled milk and honey with my words

In you those words became like poison, because ye were filled with poison from the root and foundation

How should I be grieved that grief is overthrown? Ye were grief (to me), O obstinate people 2555

Does any one lament the death of grief? Does any one tear out his hair when the sore on his head is removed?"

(Then) he turned to himself and said, "O mourner, those folk are not worth thy mourning "

Recite correctly—do not regard my misquotation—(the words in the Qur'án) "*Say, how shall I be grieved for an unjust people*[1]?"

Again he felt a weeping in his eye and heart an uncaused (involuntary) compassion shone forth in him

He was raining drops of water (shedding tears)—and he had become distraught—an uncaused drop from the Ocean of Bounty 2560

His intellect was saying, "Wherefore is this weeping? Ought one to weep for such scoffers?

Tell me, what art thou weeping for? For their fraud? For the host of their ill-shod (miserable) hatreds?

For their murky hearts full of rust? For their venomous snake-like tongues?

For their *sagsár*-like breath and teeth? For their mouths and eyes teeming with scorpions?

For their wrangling and sneering and scoffing? Give thanks, since God has imprisoned (restrained) them 2565

Their hands are perverse, their feet perverse, their eyes perverse, their love perverse, their peace perverse, their anger perverse "

For the sake of blind conformity and (for the sake of following) the standards of tradition, they set their feet (trampled) on the camels of Reason, the venerable guide

They were not eager for a guide (*pír-khar*) they all had

[1] This verse, which interrupts the story is addressed to the reader The Qur'ánic text has been altered for metrical and other reasons

become (like) an old donkey (*pír khar*) from paying hypocritical observance to each other's eyes and ears

God brought the (devout) worshippers from Paradise that He might show unto them the nurslings of Hell-fire

On the meaning of "He let the two seas go to meet one another between them is a barrier which they do not seek (to cross)"

Behold the people of (destined for) the Fire and those of Paradise dwelling in the same shop, (yet) *between them is a barrier which they do not seek to cross*

He hath mixed the people of the Fire and the people of the Light between them He hath reared the mountain of Qaf

He hath mixed (them) like earth and gold in the mine between them are a hundred deserts and caravanserays

(They are) mixed even as pearls and jet beads in the necklace, (soon to be parted) like guests of a single night

One half of the sea is sweet like sugar the taste sweet, the colour bright as the moon

The other half is bitter as snake's venom the taste bitter and the colour dark as pitch

Both (halves) dash against one another, from beneath and from the top, wave on wave like the water of the sea

The appearance of collision, (arising) from the narrow body, is (due to) the spirits' being intermingled in peace or war

The waves of peace dash against each other and root up hatreds from (men's) breasts

In other form do the waves of war turn (men's) loves upside down (confound and destroy them)

Love is drawing the bitter ones to the sweet, because the foundation of (all) loves is righteousness

Wrath is carrying away the sweet one to bitterness how should the bitter sort with (be suited to) the sweet?

The bitter and the sweet are not visible to this (ocular) sight, (but) they can be seen through the window of the latter end

The eye that sees the end (*akhir*) can see truly, the eye that sees (only) the stable (*akhur*) is delusion and error

Oh, many the one that is sweet as sugar, but poison is concealed in the sugar

He that is more sagacious (than the rest) will know it by the smell, another (only) when it touches his lips and teeth

Then his lips will reject it before (it reaches) his throat although the Devil is shouting, "Eat ye!"

And to another it will declare (itself) in his throat, while to another it will unmask in his body,

And to another it will give burning pain in evacuation its outgoing will give him instruction as to its incoming (will show him what he has swallowed),

And to another (it will become manifest) after days and months, and to another after death, from the depth of the grave,

And if he be given a respite in the depth of the grave, (then) it will inevitably become manifest on the Day of Resurrection

Every piece of candy and sugar (desirable thing) in the world manifestly has a period granted to it from the revolution of Time

Years are needed in order that the ruby in (exposed to the rays of) the sun may obtain (the perfect) tint and splendour and brilliance

Vegetables, again, reach maturity in two months, while the red rose comes to perfection in a year

For this reason the Almighty and Glorious God in the *Súratu 'l-An'am* has made mention of an appointed term (*ajal*)

You have heard this (discourse) may the whole of you, hair by hair, be an ear (to receive it)! 'Tis the Water of Life (if) you have drunk, may it do you good!

Call it the Water of Life, call it not a discourse behold the new spirit in the body of the old letter!

(Now), my friend, hearken to another saying (which is), like the soul, very clear (to mystics) and abstruse (to the rest)

In a certain place (spiritual degree), through Divine dispositions even this poison and snake (worldliness and sensuality) is (rendered) digestible

In one place (it is) poison and in one place medicine, in one place infidelity and in one place approved

Although *there* it is injurious to the soul, when it arrives *here* it becomes a remedy

In the young grape (*ghura*) the juice is sour, but it is sweet and good when the *ghura* comes to be an *angur* (ripe grape)

Again in the wine-jar it becomes bitter and unlawful, (but) in the state (form) of vinegar how excellent it is as a seasoning!

Concerning the impropriety of the disciple's (muríd) *presuming to do the same things as are done by the saint* (wali), *inasmuch as sweetmeat does no harm to the physician, but is harmful to the sick, and frost and snow do no harm to the ripe grape, but are injurious to the young fruit, for he (the disciple) is (still) on the way, for he has not (yet) become (the saint to whom are applicable the words in the Qur'an)* "That God may forgive thee thy former and latter sins"

If the saint drinks a poison it becomes an antidote, but if the seeker (disciple) drinks it, his mind is darkened

From Solomon have come the words, "*O Lord, give me* (*a kingdom that it behoves not any one after me to obtain*)," that is, "do not give this kingdom and power to any but me

2605 Do not bestow this grace and bounty on any but me" This looks like envy, but it was not that (in reality)

Read with your soul the mystery of "*it behoves not*," do not deem the inward meaning of "*after me*" (to be derived) from his (Solomon's) avarice

Nay, but in sovereignty he saw a hundred dangers the kingdom of this world was (has ever been), hair by hair (in every respect), fear for one's head

Fear for head with fear for heart with fear for religion—there is no trial for us like this

Therefore one must needs possess the high aspiration of a Solomon in order to escape from these myriads of colours and perfumes (enticing vanities)

2610 Even with such (great) strength (of spirit) as he had, the waves of that (worldly) kingdom were stifling his breath (choking him)

Since dust settled on him from this sorrow[1], he had compassion for all the kings of the world

Hence he interceded (with God on their behalf) and said, "Give this kingdom (to them) with (accompanied by) the (spiritual) perfection which Thou hast given to me

To whomsoever Thou wilt give (it), and (on whomsoever) Thou wilt confer that bounty, he (that person) is Solomon, and I also am he

He is not '*after me*,' he is with me What of 'with me,' indeed? I am without rival"

2615 'Tis my duty to explain this, but (now) I will return to the story of the man and wife

The moral of the altercation of the Arab and his wife

The heart of one who is sincere[2] is seeking (to find) a moral[3] for the altercation of the man and wife

The altercation of the man and wife has been related (as a story) know that it is a parable of your own flesh (*nafs*) and reason

This man and wife, which are the flesh and the reason, are very necessary for (the manifestation of) good and evil,

And this necessary pair in this house of earth are (engaged) in strife and altercation day and night

2620 The wife is craving requisites for the household, that is to say, reputation and bread and viands and rank

Like the wife, the flesh, in order to contrive the means (of

[1] *I e* he was sorry and ashamed that love of the world made him forgetful of God

[2] Read مخلصی   [3] Read مخلصی

gratifying its desires), is at one time seeking (having recourse to) humility and at another time to domination

The reason is really unconscious of these (worldly) thoughts in its brain is nothing but love of God

Although the inner meaning of the tale is this bait and trap[1], listen now to the outward form of the tale in its entirety

If the spiritual explanation were sufficient, the creation of the world would have been vain and idle

If love were (only spiritual) thought and reality, the form of your fasting and prayer would be non-existent

The gifts of lovers to one another are, in respect of love, naught but forms,

(But the purpose is) that the gifts may have borne testimony to feelings of love which are concealed in secrecy,

Because outward acts of kindness bear witness to feelings of love in the heart, O dear friend

Your witness is sometimes true, sometimes false, sometimes drunken with wine, sometimes with sour curds

He that has drunk sour curds makes a show of intoxication, shouts ecstatically, and behaves like one whose head is heavy (with the fumes of wine),

That hypocrite is (assiduous) in fasting and praying, in order that it may be supposed that he is drunken with devotion (to God)

In short, external acts are different (from internal feelings), (and their purpose is) to indicate that which is hidden

O Lord, grant us according to our desire such discernment that we may know the false indication from the true

Do you know how the sense-perception becomes discerning? In this way, that the sense-perception should be seeing by the light of God

And if there be no effect (outward sign), the cause too makes manifest (that which is hidden), as (for example) kinship gives information concerning love (enables you to infer the presence of love)

When the light of God comes into the sensorium (and becomes the medium of perception), you will not be a slave to effect or cause—

So that Love will throw a spark within, wax mighty, and make (the illumined one) independent of effect

He has no need for the signs of love, since Love has shot its radiance over the sky (of his heart)

There are detailed explanations (which I could give) in order to complete this subject, but seek them (for yourself), and (now) farewell

And as for him that perceived the inner meaning in this

[1] I e the temptation of the reason by the flesh

outward form, the form is (both) near to the meaning and far (from it)

In regard to indication, they (the meaning and the form) are like the sap and the tree, (but) when you turn to the quiddity, they are very far (removed from each other)

(Let me) take leave of quiddities and essential properties, and relate what happened to those twain with faces like the moon

How the Arab set his heart on (complying with) his beloved's request and swore that in thus submitting (to her) he had no (idea of) trickery and making trial (of her)

The man said, "Now I have ceased to oppose (thee) thou hast authority (to do what thou wilt) draw the sword from the sheath

Whatsoever thou biddest me do, I will obey I will not consider the bad or good result of it

2045 I will become non-existent in thy existence, because I am thy lover love makes blind and deaf"

The wife said, "Oh, I wonder if thou art (really) my friend, or whether thou art (bent on) discovering my secret by trickery?"

He said, "(No), by God who knows the thought most deeply hid, who out of dust created Adam pure (chosen above all),

Who, in the body three cubits long which He gave him, displayed everything that was contained in the tablets (of destiny) and the (world of) spirits

Through his *He (God) taught him (Adam) the Names* (through his God-given knowledge) he at the very first gave instruction (to the angels) concerning everything that shall come to pass unto everlasting,

2050 So that the angels became beside themselves (in amazement) at his teaching, and gained from his glorification (of God) a holiness other (than they possessed before)

The revelation that appeared to them from Adam was not (contained) in the amplitude of their heavens

In comparison with the spaciousness of the range of that pure spirit (Adam), the expanse of the seven heavens became narrow

The Prophet said that God has said, 'I am not contained in the jar of 'high' and 'low' (spatial dimensions),

I am not contained in earth or heaven or even in the empyrean—know this for certain, O noble one,

2055 (But) I am contained in the true believer's heart oh, how wonderful! If thou seekest Me, search in those hearts'

He (God) said (also), '*Enter among My servants*, thou wilt meet with a Paradise (consisting) of vision of Me, O God-fearing one'

The empyrean, notwithstanding its wide (far-extending) light, when it beheld that (spirit of Adam), was confounded[1]

Truly, the magnitude of the empyrean is very great, but who (what) is form when reality has arrived?

Then the angels were saying (to Adam), 'Before this (time) we had a friendship (with thee) on the dust of the earth

On the earth we were sowing the seed of service (worship) we were marvelling at that connexion,

Marvelling what connexion we had with that dust, inasmuch as our nature is of heaven

(We said), Why (this) friendship in us, who are light, with darkness? How can light live with darkness?

O Adam, that friendship was owing to the scent of thee, because earth was the woof and warp of thy body

From this place (the earth) thy earthly body was woven, in this place thy pure light was found

This (light) that our souls have obtained from thy spirit shone erstwhile from the dust

We were in the earth, and heedless of the earth, heedless of the treasure that lay buried there

When He (God) bade us journey from that place of abode our palates were soured (we were bitterly grieved) by the change,

So that we were arguing (and saying), 'O God, who will come in our stead?

Wilt Thou sell the splendour of the praise with which we glorify and magnify Thee for babble and palaver?'

The decree of God spread for us the carpet (of indulgence), (and He said), 'Speak ye, in the way of boldness

(And) without fear, whatever comes upon your tongues, like only children[2] with their father,

For what if these words (of yours) are unseemly? My mercy likewise is prior (superior) to My wrath

In order to manifest this priority, O angel, I will put in thee incitement to perplexity and doubt,

That thou mayst speak and I not take offence at thee, (so that) none who denies My clemency may dare to utter a word

Within My (infinite) clemency (the clemencies of) a hundred fathers and a hundred mothers at every moment are born and vanish

Their clemency is (but) the foam of the sea of My clemency the foam comes and goes, but the sea is (always) there''

What indeed shall I say? Compared with that pearl (Divine clemency) this oyster-shell (human clemency) is naught but the foam of the foam of the foam of foam

[1] Literally, "went from its place"

[2] *I e* like an only child, who is loved beyond measure

By the truth of that foam[1], by the truth of that pure sea, (I swear) that these words (of mine) are not (meant to make) trial of thee and are not vain.

They are from (inspired by) love and sincerity and humbleness, (I swear) by the truth of that One to whom I turn.

If this affection (which I am showing) seems to thee a trial, do thou for one moment put the (supposed) trial (of thee) to the test[2].

Do not hide thy secret (but reveal it), in order that mine may be revealed: command anything that I am able to do.

Do not hide thy heart (but reveal it), in order that mine may be revealed and that I may accept whatever I am capable of (performing).

How shall I do? What remedy is in my power? Look what a plight my soul is in."

How the wife specified to her husband the way to earn daily bread and how he accepted (her proposal)

The wife said, "A sun has shone forth, a (whole) world has received light from him—

The Vicar of the Merciful (God), the Khalífa of the Creator: through him the city of Baghdád is (gay and happy) as the season of spring.

If thou gain access to that King, thou wilt become a king: how long wilt thou go after every (kind of) misfortune?"

Companionship with the fortunate is like the Elixir: indeed, how is an Elixir like (to be compared with) their looks (of favour)?

The eye of Ahmad (Mohammed) was cast upon an Abu Bakr: he by a single act of faith became a Siddíq.

Said the husband, "How should I go to meet the King? How should I go to him without a pretext?

I must have some reference or device: is any handicraft right (possible) without tools?

As (to mention a similar case) the famous Majnún, when he heard from some one that Laylá was a little unwell,

Cried, 'Ah, how shall I go (to her) without a pretext? And if I fail to visit her when she is ill, how (wretched) shall I be!

Would that I were a skilled physician! I would have gone on foot to Laylá first of all (before any one else).'

God said to us, '*Say, Come ye*,' in order to signify to us the (means of) vanquishing our feeling of shame.

If bats had sight and means (ability to bear the sunshine), they would fly about and enjoy themselves by day."

[1] Here the Arab begins once more to plead with his wife.
[2] *I.e.* 'try by experiment whether your suspicions are just.'

The wife said, "When the gracious King goes into the field (*maydán*)[1], the essence of every lack of means (inability) becomes a means (ability),

Because the means (ability) is (involves) pretension and self-existence the (pith of the) matter lies in lack of means (inability) and non-existence "

"How," said he, "should I do business without means, unless I make it manifest that I (really) have no means?

Therefore I must needs have attestation of my want of means, that he (the King) may pity me in want

Do thou produce some attestation besides talk and show, so that the beauteous King may take pity,

For the testimony that consisted of talk and show was (ever) invalidated before that Supreme Judge

He requires truth (veracity) as witness to his (the indigent man's) state, so that his (inner) light shall shine forth (and proclaim his indigence) without any words of his "

How the Arab carried a jug of rain-water from the midst of the desert as a gift to the Commander of the Faithful at Baghdád, in the belief that in that town also there was a scarcity of water

The wife said, "When people with all their might (endeavour to) rise up entirely purged of self-existence—that is veracity

We have the rain-water in the jug 'tis thy property and capital and means

Take this jug of water and depart, make it a gift and go into the presence of the King of kings

Say, 'We have no means except this in the desert there is nothing better than this water '

If his treasury is full of gold and jewels, (yet) he does not get water like this 'tis rare "

What is that jug? Our confined body within it is the briny water of our senses

O Lord, accept this jar and jug of mine by the grace of "*God hath purchased (from the believers their lives and wealth in return for Paradise)* "

('Tis) a jug with five spouts, the five senses keep this water pure (and safe) from every filth,

That there may be from this jug a passage to the sea, and that my jug may assume the nature of the sea,

So that when you carry it as a gift to the King, the King may find it pure and be its purchaser,

(And) after that, its water will become without end a hundred worlds will be filled from my jug

Stop up its spouts and keep it filled (with water) from the jar (of Reality) God said, "*Close your eyes to vain desire* "

[1] *I e* displays himself

2715 His (the husband's) beard was full of wind (he was puffed up with pride). "Who (thought he) has such a gift as this? This, truly, is worthy of a King like him."

The wife did not know that in that place (Baghdád) on the thoroughfare there is the great stream (of water) sweet as sugar,

Flowing like a sea through the city, full of boats and fishing-nets.

Go to the Sultan and behold this pomp and state! Behold the senses of (*those for whom God hath prepared gardens*) *beneath which the rivers flow!*

Our senses and perceptions, such as they are, are (but) a single drop in those rivers.

How the Arab's wife sewed the jug of rain-water in a felt cloth and put a seal on it because of the Arab's utter conviction (that it was a precious gift for the King)

2720 "Yes," said the husband, "stop up the mouth of the jug. Take care, for this is a gift that will bring us profit.

Sew this jug in felt, that the King may break his fast with our gift,

For there is no (water) like this in all the world: no (other) water is so pure as this."

(This he said) because they (people like him) are always full of infirmity and half-blind from (drinking) bitter and briny waters.

The bird whose dwelling-place is the briny water, how should it know where to find in it the clear (and sweet) water?

2725 O thou whose abode is in the briny spring, how shouldst thou know the Shaṭṭ and the Jayhun and the Euphrates?

O thou who hast not escaped from this fleeting caravanseray (the material world), how shouldst thou know (the meaning of) "self-extinction" and (mystical) "intoxication" and "expansion"?

And if thou knowest, 'tis (by rote, like the knowledge) handed down to thee from father and grandfather: to thee these names are like *abjad*.[1]

How plain and evident to all children are *abjad* and *hawwaz*[2], and (yet) the real meaning is far away (hard to reach).

Then the Arab man took up the jug and set out to journey, carrying it along (with him) day and night.

2730 He was trembling for the jug, in fear of Fortune's mischiefs: all the same, he conveyed it from the desert to the city (Baghdád).

His wife unrolled the prayer-rug in supplication; she made (the words) *Rabbi sallim* (Save, O Lord) her litany in prayer,

[1] I.e. like the alphabet. *Abjad* is a mnemonic word composed of the Arabic letters equivalent to *ABJD*.

[2] A similar word consisting of the Arabic letters equivalent to *HWZ*.

Crying, "Keep our water safe from scoundrels! O Lord, let that pearl arrive at that sea!

Although my husband is shrewd and artful, yet the pearl has thousands of enemies.

Pearl indeed[1]! 'Tis the water of Kawthar: 'tis a drop of this that is the origin of the pearl."

Through the prayers and lamentation of the wife, and through the husband's anxiety and his patience under the heavy burden, 2735

He bore it without delay, safe from robbers and unhurt by stones, to the seat of the Caliphate (the Caliph's palace).

He saw a bountiful Court, (where) the needy had spread their nets;

Everywhere, moment by moment, some petitioner gained (and carried away) from that Court a donation and robe of honour.

'Twas like sun and rain, nay, like Paradise, for infidel and true believer and good folk and bad.

He beheld some people arrayed (with favour) in the sight (of the Caliph), and others who had risen to their feet (and were) waiting (to receive his commands). 2740

High and low, from Solomon to the ant, they (all) had become quickened with life, like the world at the blast of the trumpet (on the Day of Resurrection).

The followers of Form were woven (entangled) in pearls, the followers of Reality had found the Sea of Reality.

Those without aspiration—how aspiring had they become! and those of high aspiration—to what felicity had they attained!

Showing that, as the beggar is in love with bounty and in love with the bountiful giver, so the bounty of the bountiful giver is in love with the beggar: if the beggar have the greater patience, the bountiful giver will come to his door, and if the bountiful giver have the greater patience, the beggar will come to his door; but the beggar's patience is a virtue in the beggar, while the patience of the bountiful giver is in him a defect.

A loud call was coming (to his ears): "Come, O seeker! Bounty is in need of beggars (it is needy) like a beggar."

Bounty is seeking the beggars and the poor, just as fair ones who seek a clear mirror. 2745

The face of the fair is made beautiful by the mirror, the face of Beneficence is made visible by the beggar.

Therefore on this account God said in the Súra *Wa'ḍ-Ḍuha*, "O Mohammed, do not shout at (and drive away) the beggar."

[1] Literally, "what indeed is the (ordinary) pearl (compared with this 'pearl' of ours)?" Pearls were supposed to be rain-drops caught by the oyster-shell.

Inasmuch as the beggar is the mirror of Bounty, take care! Breath is hurtful to the face of the mirror

In the one case, his (the giver's) bounty makes the beggar manifest (causes him to beg), while in the other case he (the giver), (without being asked), bestows on the beggars more (than they need)

2750 Beggars, then, are the mirror of God's bounty, and they that are with God are (united with) the Absolute Bounty,

And every one except those two (types of beggar) is truly a dead man he is not at this door (the Divine Court), he is (lifeless as) a picture (embroidered) on a curtain

The difference between one that is poor for (desirous of) God and thirsting for Him and one that is poor of (destitute of) God and thirsting for what is other than He

He (that seeks other than God) is the (mere) picture of a dervish, he is not worthy of bread (Divine bounty) do not throw bread to the picture of a dog!

He wants a morsel of food, he does not want God do not set dishes before a lifeless picture!

The dervish that wants bread is a land-fish (he has) the form of a fish, but (he is) fleeing from the sea

2755 He is a domestic fowl, not the Simurgh of the air he swallows sweet morsels (of food), he does not eat from God

He loves God for the sake of gain his soul is not in love with (God's) excellence and beauty

If he conceives that he is in love with the Essence (of God), conception of the (Divine) names and attributes is not the Essence

Conception is begotten of qualities and definition God is not begotten, He is *lam yulad*

How should he that is in love with his own imagination and conception be one of them that love the Lord of bounties?

60 If the lover of that (false) conception be sincere, that metaphor (unreal judgement) will lead him to the reality

The exposition of this saying demands a commentary, but I am afraid of senile (feeble) minds

Senile and short-sighted minds bring a hundred evil fancies into their thoughts

Not every one is able to hear rightly the fig is not a morsel for every little bird,

Especially a bird that is dead, putrid, a blind, eyeless (fellow) filled with vain fancy

2765 To the picture of a fish what is the difference between sea and land? To the colour of a Hindoo what is the difference between soap and black vitriol?

If you depict the portrait on the paper as sorrowful, it has no lesson (learns nothing) of sorrow or joy

Its appearance is sorrowful, but it is free from that (sorrow), (or) its appearance is smiling, but it has no (inward) impression of that (joy)

And this (worldly) sorrow and joy which are delineated in the heart are naught but a picture in comparison with that (spiritual) joy and sorrow

The picture's smiling appearance is for your sake, in order that by means of that picture the reality may be established (rightly understood by you)

The pictures (phenomena) which are in these hot baths (the 2770
world), (when viewed) from outside the undressing-room (of self-abandonment), are like clothes

So long as you are outside, you see only the clothes (phenomena) put off your clothes and enter (the bath of reality), O kindred spirit,

Because, *with* your clothes, there is no way (of getting) inside the body is ignorant of the soul, the clothes (are ignorant) of the body

How the Caliph's officers and chamberlains came forward to pay their respects to the Bedouin and to receive his gift

When the Bedouin arrived from the remote desert to the gate of the Caliph's palace,

The court officers went to meet the Bedouin they sprinkled much rose-water of graciousness on his bosom

Without speech (on his part) they perceived what he wanted 2775
it was their practice to give before being asked

Then they said to him, "O chief of the Arabs, whence dost thou come? How art thou after the journey and fatigue?"

He said, "I am a chief, if ye give me any countenance (favour), I am without means (of winning respect) when ye put me behind your backs

O ye in whose faces are the marks of eminence, O ye whose splendour is more pleasing than the gold of Ja'far,

O ye, one sight of whom is (worth many) sights, O ye at the sight of whom pieces of gold are scattered (as largesse),

O ye, all of whom have become seeing by the light of God, 2780
who have come from God for the sake of munificence,

That ye may cast the elixir of your looks upon the copper of human individuals[1],

I am a stranger I have come from the desert I have come in hope of (gaining) the grace of the Sultan

[1] *I e* in order that you may transmute the base metal of human nature and endue it with Divine qualities"

The scent of his grace covered (took entire possession of) the deserts even the grains of sand were ensouled (thereby)

I came all the way to this place for the sake of dinars as soon as I arrived, I became drunken with sight (contemplation) "

2785 A person ran to the baker for bread on seeing the beauty of the baker, he gave up the ghost

A certain man went to the rose-garden to take his pleasure, and found it in the beauty of the gardener[1],

Like the desert Arab who drew water from the well and tasted the Water of Life from the (lovely) face of Joseph[2]

Moses went to fetch fire he beheld such a Fire (the Burning Bush) that he escaped from (searching after) fire

Jesus sprang up, to escape from his enemies that spring carried him to the Fourth Heaven

2790 The ear of wheat[3] became a trap for Adam, so that his existence became the wheat-ear (seed and origin) of mankind

The falcon comes to the snare for food it finds the fore-arm (wrist) of the King and fortune and glory

The child went to school to acquire knowledge, in hope of (getting) its father's pretty bird (as a prize),

Then, by (going to) school, that child rose to the top, paid monthly fees (to his teacher), and became perfect[4] (in knowledge)

'Abbás had come to war for vengeance' sake, for the purpose of subduing Ahmad (Mohammed) and opposing the (true) religion

2795 He and his descendants in the Caliphate became a back and front (complete support) to the (true) religion until the Resurrection

"I came to this court in quest of wealth as soon as I entered the portico I became (a spiritual) chief[5]

I brought water as a gift for the sake of (getting) bread hope of bread led me to the highest place in Paradise

Bread drove an Adam forth from Paradise bread caused me to mix (made me consort) with those who belong to Paradise

I have been freed, like the angels, from water and bread (materiality) without (any worldly) object of desire I move round this court, like the (revolving) sphere of heaven "

2800 Nothing in the world is without object (disinterested) in its movement (activity) except the bodies and the souls of (God's) lovers

[1] Literally "the beauty of the gardener (not the charm of the garden) turned out to be his recreation

[2] Joseph is said to have escaped from the well by clinging to a bucket

[3] *I e* the forbidden fruit

[4] Literally, "a full moon "

[5] Literally "I became the seat of honour "

Showing that the lover of this world is like the lover of a wall on which the sunbeams strike, who makes no effort and exertion to perceive that the radiance and splendour do not proceed from the wall, but from the orb of the sun in the Fourth Heaven, consequently he sets his whole heart on the wall, and when the sunbeams rejoin the sun (at sunset), he is left for ever in despair "and a bar is placed between them and that which they desire"

The lovers of the Whole are not those who love the part he that longed for the part failed to attain unto the Whole

When a part falls in love with a part, the object of its love soon goes (returns) to its own whole

He (the lover of the particular) became the laughing-stock of another's slave he became (like a man who was) drowning and clung to some one weak (and powerless to help him)

He (the loved slave) possesses no authority, that he should care for him shall he do his own master's business or his (the lover's)[1]?

The Arabic proverb, "If you commit fornication, commit it with a free woman, and if you steal, steal a pearl"

Hence (the saying), "Commit fornication with a free woman," became proverbial, (and the words) "steal a pearl" were transferred (metaphorically) to this (meaning)

The slave (the loved one) went away to his master he (the lover) was left in misery The scent of the rose went (back) to the rose he was left with the thorn

He was left far from the object of his desire—his labour lost, his toil useless, his foot wounded,

Like the hunter who catches a shadow—how should the shadow become his property?

The man has grasped tightly the shadow of a bird, (while) the bird on the branch of the tree is fallen into amazement,

(Thinking), "I wonder who this crack-brained fellow is laughing at? Here's folly for you, here's a rotten cause[2]!"

And if you say that the part is connected with the whole, (then) eat thorns the thorn is connected with the rose

Except from one point of view[3], it (the part) is not connected with the whole otherwise, indeed, the mission of the prophets would be vain,

[1] *I e* ' he must do his master's business and not concern himself with the lover's "

[2] *I e* a cause that cannot lead to any good result

[3] Reading حز ریك رو

Inasmuch as the prophets are (sent) in order to connect (the part with the whole) how, then, should they (the prophets) connect them when they are (already) one body?

This discourse hath no end O lad, the day is late conclude the tale

How the Arab delivered the gift, that is, the jug to the Caliph's servants

2815 He presented the jug of water, he sowed the seed of homage in that (exalted) court

"Bear this gift," said he, "to the Sultan, redeem the King's suitor from indigence

'Tis sweet water and a new green jug—some of the rain-water that collected in the ditch"

The officials smiled at that, but they accepted it (the jug) as (though it were precious as) life,

Because the graciousness of the good and wise King had made a mark (impressed itself) on all the courtiers

2820 The disposition of kings settles (becomes implanted) in their subjects the green sky[1] makes the earth verdant

Regard the king as a reservoir with pipes in every direction, and water running from all (the pipes) like hoppers (in a mill)

When the water in all (the pipes) is from a pure reservoir, every single one gives sweet water, pleasant to taste,

But if the water in the reservoir is brackish and dirty, every pipe brings the same to view,

Because every pipe is connected with the reservoir Dive, dive into (ponder deeply) the meaning of these words

2825 (Consider) how the imperial grace of the homeless Spirit[2] has produced effects on the whole body,

How the grace of Reason, which is of goodly nature, of goodly lineage, brings the entire body into discipline,

How Love, saucy, uncontrolled, and restless, throws the whole body into madness

The purity of the water of the Sea that is like Kawthar (is such that) all its pebbles are pearls and gems

For whatever science the master is renowned, the souls of his pupils become endued with the same

2830 With the master-theologian the quick and industrious pupil reads (scholastic) theology

With the master-jurist the student of jurisprudence reads jurisprudence, when he (the teacher) expounds it, not theology

Then the master who is a grammarian—the soul of his pupil becomes imbued by him with grammar

Again, the master who is absorbed in the Way (of Súfism)—

[1] Equivalent to our "blue sky"

[2] *I.e.* the spirit which has no spatial relations

because of him the soul of his pupil is absorbed in the King (God)

Of all these various kinds of knowledge, on the day of death the (best) equipment and provision for the road is the knowledge of (spiritual) poverty

The story of what passed between the grammarian and the boatman

A certain grammarian embarked in a boat That self-con- 2835
ceited person turned to the boatman

And said, "Have you ever studied grammar?" "No," he replied The other said, "Half your life is gone to naught"

The boatman became heart-broken with grief, but at the time he refrained from answering

The wind cast the boat into a whirlpool the boatman spoke loud (shouted) to the grammarian,

"Tell me, do you know how to swim?" "No," said he, "O fair-spoken[1] good-looking man!"

"O grammarian," said he, "your whole life is naught, be- 2840
cause the boat is sinking in these whirlpools"

Know that here *mahw* (self-effacement) is needed, not *nahw* (grammar) if you are *mahw* (dead to self), plunge into the sea without peril

The water of the sea places the dead one on its head (causes him to float on the surface), but if he be living, how shall he escape from the sea?

Inasmuch as you have died to the attributes of the flesh, the Sea of (Divine) consciousness will place you on the crown of its head (will raise you to honour)

(But) O thou who hast called the people asses, at this time thou art left (floundering), like an ass, upon this ice

If in the world thou art the most learned scholar of the time, 2845
behold the passing-away of this world and this time!

We have stitched in (inserted) the (story of the) grammarian, that we might teach you the grammar (*nahw*) of self-effacement (*mahw*)

In self-loss[2], O venerated friend, thou wilt find the jurisprudence of jurisprudence, the grammar of grammar, and the accidence of accidence[3]

That jug of water is (an emblem of) our different sorts of knowledge, and the Caliph is the Tigris of God's knowledge

We are carrying jugs full (of water) to the Tigris if we do not know ourselves to be asses, asses we are

[1] Literally, "answering pleasantly"
[2] Literally, "in becoming less"
[3] *I e* the cream and essence of these sciences

2890 In order that the idol-shape may not remain on the gold, because Form hinders and waylays (those who seek Reality)

The essence of its gold is the essence of Lordship (Divinity) the idol-stamp on the sterling gold is borrowed (unreal)

Do not burn a blanket on account of a flea, and do not let the day go (to waste) on account of every gnat's headache[1]

You are an idol-worshipper when you remain in (bondage to) forms leave its (the idol's) form and look at the reality

If you are a man (bound) for the Pilgrimage, seek a pilgrim (as your) companion, whether he be a Hindoo or a Turcoman or an Arab

2895 Do not look at his figure and colour, look at his purpose and intention

If he is black, (yet) he is in accord with you call him white, for (spiritually) his complexion is the same as yours

This story has been told up and down (confusedly), like the doings of lovers, without foot (end) or head (beginning)

It hath no head, inasmuch as it existed before eternity, it hath no foot it has (always) been akin to everlastingness

Nay, it is like water every drop thereof is both head and foot, and at the same time without both

2900 This is not a story, mark you! God forbid! This is the ready money (presentation, here and now) of my state and yours Consider (it) well,

Because the Sufi is grand and glorious (in his spiritual vision) whatever is past is not remembered (does not enter his mind)

We are both the Arab and the jug and the King, we are all *he that has been turned away from it (the Truth) shall be turned away*

Know that the husband is Reason, and the wife is greed and cupidity these twain are dark and deniers (of Reason), Reason is the (bright) candle

Now hear the origin of their denial, whence it arose (it arose) from the fact that the Whole hath various parts

2905 The parts of the Whole are not parts in relation to the Whole—(they are) not like the scent of the rose, which is a part of the rose

The beauty of (all) green herbs is a part of the Rose's beauty, the coo of the turtle-dove is a part of that Nightingale

If I become occupied with a difficulty (difficult question) and the answer (explanation), how shall I be able to give water to the thirsty?

If you are wholly perplexed and in straits, have patience patience is the key to joy[2]

[1] I.e. every trivial vexation

[2] *Faraj* is properly the feeling of relief produced by the removal of pain or anxiety

Abstain from (distracting) thoughts, abstain thought is (like) the lion and the wild ass, and (men's) hearts are the thickets (which they haunt)

Acts of abstinence are superior to medicines, because scratching is an increase (aggravation) of the itch

Assuredly abstinence is the first principle of medicine abstain, and behold the strength of the spirit

Receive these words, like the (open) ear, that I may make for you an earring of gold

(Then) you will become a ring in the ear of (devoted to) the Moon that works in gold, you will ascend to the moon and the Pleiades

First, hear (and learn) that the diverse created beings are spiritually different, from *ya* (Y) to *alif* (A)

Amongst the various letters there is a confusion and uncertainty, though from one point of view they are (all) one from head (beginning) to foot (end)

From one aspect they are opposites, and from one aspect they are unified, from one aspect they are jest, and from one aspect they are earnest

Therefore the Resurrection is the day of the supreme inspection inspection is desired by him (only) who is glorious and splendid

Whoever is like a fraudulent Hindoo[1], for him the day of inspection is the time of exposure

Inasmuch as he hath not a face like the sun, he desires nothing but night (to cover him) like a veil

Since his thorn hath not a single rose-leaf, Spring is the enemy of his conscience,

While to one that is roses and lilies from head to foot Spring is (welcome as) a pair of bright eyes

The unspiritual thorn wishes for autumn, for autumn, in order that it may jostle with (contend as a rival with) the rose-garden,

And that it (autumn) may hide the beauty of that (the rose) and the shame of this (the thorn), so that you may not see the colour of that and the colour of this

Therefore autumn is its (the thorn's) Spring and life, (for then) the (worthless) stone and the pure ruby appear one

The Gardener knows that (difference) even in autumn, but the One's sight is better than the world's sight

Truly that One Person is (essentially) the (whole) world he is unaware of evil (does not know evil as such) The stars, every one, are all part of the Moon

Therefore every fair form and shape (in the world) is crying, "Good news! good news! Lo, here comes the Spring"

[1] Literally, "a Hindoo who does bad trade" *i e* a reprobate whose dealings with God result in his perdition

So long as the blossom is shining like a coat of mail, how should the fruits display their knobs?

When the blossom is shed, the fruit comes to a head when the body is shattered, the spirit lifts up its head

2930 The fruit is the reality, the blossom is its form the blossom is the good news, the fruit is the bounty (given as a reward) for it

When the blossom was shed, the fruit became visible when that diminished this began to increase

How should bread give strength until it is broken? How should uncrushed clusters (of grapes) yield wine?

Unless myrobalan is pounded up with medicines, how should the medicines by themselves become health-increasing (act as tonics)?

Concerning the qualities of the Pír (Spiritual Guide) and (the duty of) obedience to him

O Splendour of the Truth, Husámu'ddín, take one or two sheets of paper and add (them to the poem) in description of the Pír

2935 Although thy slender body hath no strength, yet without the sun (of thy spirit) we have no light

Although thou hast become the lighted wick and the glass (lamp)[1], yet thou art the heart's leader (the Spiritual Guide) thou art the end of the thread (which serves as a clue)

Inasmuch as the end of the thread is in thy hand and will, the beads (of spiritual knowledge) on the heart's necklace are (derived) from thy bounty

Write down what appertains to the Pír (Guide) who knows the Way --Choose the Pír and regard him as the essence of the Way

The Pír is (like) summer, and (other) people are (like) the autumn month, (other) people are like night, and the Pír is the moon

2940 I have bestowed on (my) young Fortune (Husámu'ddín) the name of Pír (old), because he is (made) old by the Truth, not (made) old by Time

So old is he that he hath no beginning there is no rival to such a unique Pearl

Verily, old wine grows more potent, verily, old gold is more highly prized

Choose a Pír, for without a Pír this journey is exceeding full of woe and affright and danger

Without an escort you are bewildered (even) on a road you have travelled many times (before)

[1] *I.e.* 'although thou hast attained to the uttermost degree of illumination.' Cf. Qur'án, xxiv, 35

Do not, then, travel alone on a Way that you have not seen at all, do not turn your head away from the Guide

Fool, if his shadow (protection) be not over you, then the cry of the ghoul will keep you (wandering about) with your head in a whirl

The ghoul will (entice you) from the Way (and) cast you into destruction there have been in this Way many craftier than you (who have perished miserably)

Hear (learn) from the Qur'án the perdition of the wayfarers, what the evil-souled Iblis did unto them

He carried them far—a journey of hundreds of thousands of years—from the Highway, and made them backsliders and naked (devoid of good works)

Behold their bones and their hair! Take warning, and drive not your ass towards them!

Seize the neck of your ass (the flesh) and lead him towards the Way, towards the good keepers and knowers of the Way

Beware! do not let your ass go, and do not remove your hand from him, because his love is for the place where green herbs are plentiful

If you carelessly leave him free for one moment, he will go (many) leagues in the direction of the herbage

The ass is an enemy to the Way, (he is) madly in love with fodder oh, many is the attendant on him that he has brought to ruin!

If you know not the Way, whatsoever the ass desires, do the contrary thereof that, surely, will be the right Way

(The Prophet said), "Consult them (women), and then oppose (them in what they advise) he that disobeys them not will be ruined"

Be not a friend to (sensual) passion and desire, since it leads you astray from the Way of God

Nothing in the world will break (mortify) this passion like the shadow (protection) of fellow-travellers

How the Prophet, on whom be peace, enjoined 'Alí—may God make his person honoured—saying, "When every one seeks to draw nigh to God by means of some kind of devotional act, do thou seek the favour of God by associating with His wise and chosen servant, that thou mayst be the first of all to arrive (to gain access to Him)"

The Prophet said to 'Alí, "O 'Alí, thou art the Lion of God, thou art a courageous knight,

But do not even rely upon thy lion-heartedness come into the shade of the palm-tree of hope

Come into the shade (protection) of the Sage whom no conveyer can carry off from the Way

His shadow on the earth is like Mount Qáf, his spirit is (like) the Símurgh that circles (soars) exceedingly high

If I should tell of his qualities until the Resurrection, do not seek (expect) any conclusion and end to them

The (Divine) Sun has veiled Himself in Man apprehend (this mystery), and God knows best what is right

2965 O 'Alí, above all devotional acts in the Way (of God) do thou choose the shadow (protection) of the servant of God

Every one took refuge in some act of devotion and discovered for themselves some means of deliverance

Go thou, take refuge in the shadow of the Sage, that thou mayst escape from the Enemy that opposes (thee) in secret

Of all acts of devotion this is the best for thee (thereby) thou wilt gain precedence over every one that has outstripped (the rest)"

When the Pír has accepted thee, take heed, surrender thyself (to him) go, like Moses, under the authority of Khiẓr

2970 Bear patiently whatever is done by a Khiẓr who is without hypocrisy, in order that Khiẓr may not say, "Begone, *this is (our) parting*"

Though he stave in the boat, do not speak a word, though he kill a child, do not tear thy hair

God has declared that his (the Pír's) hand is as His own, since He gave out (the words) *the Hand of God is above their hands*

The Hand of God causes him (the child) to die and (then) brings him to life What of life? He makes him a spirit everlasting

If any one, by rare exception, traversed this Way alone (without a Pír), he arrived (at his goal) through the help (and favour) of the hearts of the Pírs

2975 The hand of the Pír is not withdrawn from the absent (those who are not under his authority) his hand is naught but the grasp of God

Inasmuch as they give such a robe of honour to the absent, (what must they give their disciples?) undoubtedly the present are better than the absent

Since they are bestowing (spiritual) food on the absent, see what bounties they must lay before one who is present

Where is one that girds himself (for service) before them to (*i e* how far superior is he to) one that is outside the door?

When thou hast chosen thy Pír, be not faint-hearted, be not weak as water and crumbly as earth

2980 If thou art enraged by every blow, then how wilt thou become a (clear) mirror without being polished?

How the man of Qazwín was tattooing the figure of a lion in blue on his shoulders, and (then) repenting because of the (pain of the) needle-pricks

Hear from the narrator this story about the way and custom of the people of Qazwín

They tattoo themselves in blue with the point of a needle on body and hand and shoulders, so as to suffer no injury

A certain man of Qazwín went to a barber and said, "Tattoo me (and) do it charmingly (artistically)"

"O valiant sir," said he, "what figure shall I tattoo?" He answered, "Prick in the figure of a furious lion

Leo is my ascendant tattoo the form of a lion Exert yourself, prick in plenty of the blue dye"

"On what place," he asked, "shall I tattoo you?" Said he, "Prick the design of the beauty[1] on my shoulder-blade"

As soon as he began to stick in the needle, the pain of it settled in the shoulder,

And the hero fell a-moaning—"O illustrious one, you have killed me what figure are you tattooing?"

"Why," said he, "you bade me do a lion" "What limb (of the lion)," asked the other, "did you begin with?"

"I have begun at the tail," said he "O my dear friend[2]," he cried, "leave out the tail!

My breath is stopped by the lion's tail and rump his rump has tightly closed (choked) my windpipe

Let the lion be without a tail, O lion-maker, for my heart is faint from the blows of the prong (the tattooer's needle)"

That person commenced to prick in (the blue) on another part (of the man's shoulder) without fear, without favour, without mercy

He yelled—"Which of his members is this?" "This is his ear, my good man," the barber replied

"O Doctor," said he, "let him have no ears omit the ears and cut the frock short"

The barber began to insert (his needle) in another part once more the man of Qazwín set out to wail,

Saying, "What is the member (you are pricking in) now on this third spot?" He replied, "This is the lion's belly, my dear sir"

"Let the lion have no belly," said he "what need of a belly for the picture that is (already) sated[3]?"

The barber became distraught and remained in great be-

[1] Literally, "idol"
[2] Literally, "O my two eyes"
[3] I.e. it has already imbibed as much of the blue dye as I can bear"

wilderment he stood for a long time with his fingers in his teeth,

3000 Then the master flung the needle to the ground and said, "Has this happened to any one in the world?

Who (ever) saw a lion without tail and head and belly? God himself did not create a lion like this."

O brother, endure the pain of the lancet, that you may escape from the poison of your miscreant self (*nafs*),

For sky and sun and moon bow in worship to the people who have escaped from self-existence.

Any one in whose body the miscreant self has died, sun and cloud obey his command.

3005 Since his heart has learned to light the candle (of spiritual knowledge and love), the sun cannot burn him.

God hath made mention of the rising sun as *turning aside*—like that[1]—*from their cave*.

The thorn becomes entirely beautiful, like the rose, in the sight of the particular that is going towards the Universal.

What is (the meaning of) to exalt and glorify God? To deem yourself despicable and (worthless) as dust.

What is (the meaning of) to learn the knowledge of God's unity? To consume yourself in the presence of the One.

3010 If you wish to shine like day, burn up your night-like self-existence.

Melt away your existence, as copper (melts away) in the elixir, in the being of Him who fosters (and sustains) existence.

You have fastened both your hands tight on (are determined not to give up) "I" and "we": all this (spiritual) ruin is caused by dualism.[2]

How the wolf and fox went to hunt in attendance on the lion.

A lion, wolf, and fox had gone to hunt in the mountains in quest (of food),

That by supporting each other they might tie fast the bonds and fetters (of captivity) on the hunted animals,

3015 And all three together might seize much and great quarry in that deep wilderness.

Although the fierce lion was ashamed of them (the wolf and fox), yet he did them honour and gave them his company on the way.

To a king like this the (escort of) soldiers are an annoyance, but he accompanied them: a united party is a mercy (from God).

A moon like this is disgraced by the stars: it is amongst the stars for generosity's sake.

[1] *I.e.* "towards the right hand," as is stated in Qur'án, xviii, 16.
[2] Literally, "by two existents."

The (Divine) command, *Consult them*, came to the Prophet, though no counsel is to be compared with his own

In the scales barley has become the companion of gold[1], 3020
(but that is) not because barley has become a substance like gold

The spirit has now become the body's fellow-traveller the dog has become for a time the guardian of the palace-gate

When this party (the wolf and fox) went to the mountains at the stirrup (side) of the lion majestic and grand,

They found a mountain-ox and goat and fat hare, and their business went forward (prosperously)

Whoever is on the heels of him that is a lion in combat, roast-meat does not fail him by day or by night

When they brought them (the animals which they had caught) 3025
from the mountains to the jungle, killed and wounded and dragging along in (streams of) blood,

The wolf and fox hoped that a division (of the prey) would be made according to the justice of emperors

The reflexion of the hope of both of them struck the lion the lion knew (what was) the ground for those hopes

Any one that is the lion and prince of (spiritual) mysteries, he will know all that the conscience thinks

Beware! Guard thyself, O heart disposed to thinking, from any evil thought in his presence

He knows and keeps riding on[2] silently he smiles in thy face 3030
in order to mask (his feelings)

When the lion perceived their bad ideas, he did not declare (his knowledge), and paid (courteous) regard (to them) at the time,

But he said to himself, "I will show you what (chastisement) ye deserve, O beggarly villains!

Was my judgement not enough for you? Is this your opinion of my bounty,

O ye whose understanding and judgement are (derived) from my judgement and from my world-adorning gifts?

What else (but good) should the picture think of the painter, 3035
since he bestowed thought and knowledge upon it?

Had ye such a vile opinion of me, O ye who are a scandal to the world?

I will strike off the hypocritical heads of *them that think ill of God*

I will deliver the Sphere (of Time) from your disgrace, so that this tale shall remain in the world (as a warning)"

While thus meditating, the lion continued to smile visibly do not trust the smiles of the lion!

[1] *I e* both are weighed
[2] Literally, "driving his ass"

3040 Worldly wealth is (like) the smiles of God it has made us drunken and vainglorious and threadbare (deprived of the means of salvation)

Poverty and distress are better for thee, O lord, for (then) that smile will remove its lure

How the lion made trial of the wolf and said, "Come forward, O wolf, and divide the prey amongst us"

The lion said, "O wolf, divide this (prey) O old wolf, make justice new (give it new life by thy example)

Be my deputy in the office of distributor, that it may be seen of what substance thou art"

"O King," said he, "the wild ox is thy share he is big, and thou art big and strong and active

3045 The goat is mine, for the goat is middle and intermediate, do thou, O fox, receive the hare, and no mistake!"

The lion said, "O wolf, how hast thou spoken? Say! When I am here, dost thou speak of 'I' and 'thou'?

Truly, what a cur the wolf must be, that he regarded himself in the presence of a lion like me who am peerless and unrivalled!"

(Then) he said, "Come forward, O thou self-esteeming ass!" He approached him, the lion seized him with his claws and rent him

Inasmuch as he (the lion) did not see in him the kernel of right conduct, he tore the skin off his head as a punishment

3050 He said, "Since the sight of me did not transport[1] thee out of thyself, a spirit like this (thine) must needs die miserably

Since thou wert not passing away (from thyself) in my presence, 'twas an act of grace to smite thy neck (behead thee)"

Everything is perishing except His face unless thou art in His face (essence), do not seek to exist

When any one has passed away (from himself) in my face (essence), (the words) *everything is perishing* are not applicable (to him),

Because he is in *except*, he has transcended *not* (nonentity) whosoever is in *except* has not passed away (perished)

3055 Whosoever is uttering 'I' and 'we' at the door (of the Divine Court), he is turned back from the door and is continuing in *not* (nonentity)

[1] Read نبرد

The story of the person who knocked at a friend's door his friend from within asked who he was he said, "'Tis I," and the friend answered, "Since thou art thou, I will not open the door I know not any friend that is 'I'"

A certain man came and knocked at a friend's door his friend asked him, "Who art thou, O trusty one?"

He answered, "I " The friend said, "Begone, 'tis not the time (for thee to come in) at a table like this there is no place for the raw "

Save the fire of absence and separation, who (what) will cook the raw one? Who (what) will deliver him from hypocrisy?

The wretched man went away, and for a year in travel (and) in separation from his friend he was burned with sparks of fire

That burned one was cooked then he returned and again paced to and fro beside the house of his comrade

He knocked at the door with a hundred fears and respects, lest any disrespectful word might escape from his lips

His friend called to him, "Who is at the door?" He answered, "'Tis thou art at the door, O charmer of hearts "

"Now," said the friend, "since thou art I, come in, O myself there is not room in the house for two I's

The double end of thread is not for the needle inasmuch as thou art single, come into this needle "

'Tis the thread that is connected with the needle the eye of the needle is not suitable for the camel

How should the existence (body) of the camel be fined down save by the shears of ascetic exercises and works?

For that, O reader, the hand (power) of God is necessary, for it is the *Be, and it was* (bringer into existence) of every (seemingly) impossible thing

By His hand every impossible thing is made possible, by fear of Him every unruly one is made quiet

What of the man blind from birth and the leper? Even the dead is made living by the spell of the Almighty,

And that non-existence which is more dead than the dead— non-existence is compelled (to obey) when He calls it into being

Recite (the text), *Every day He is (engaged) in some affair* do not deem Him idle and inactive

His least act, every day, is that He despatches three armies

One army from the loins (of the fathers) towards the mothers, in order that the plant may grow in the womb,

One army from the wombs to the Earth, that the world may be filled with male and female,

One army from the Earth (to what is) beyond death, that every one may behold the beauty of (good) works

This discourse hath no end Come, hasten (back) to those two sincere and devoted friends

Description of Unification

His friend said to him, "Come in, O thou who art entirely myself, not different like the rose and thorn in the garden"

The thread has become single Do not now fall into error if thou seest that the letters K and N are two[1]'

K and N are pulling like a noose, that they may draw non-existence into great affairs

3080 Hence the noose must be double in (the world of) forms, though those two (letters) are single in effect

Whether the feet be two or four, they traverse one road, like the double shears (which) makes (but) one cut

Look at those two fellow-washermen there is apparently a difference between that one and this

The one has thrown the cotton garments into the water, while the other partner is drying them

Again the former makes the dry clothes wet 'tis as though he were spitefully thwarting his opposite,

3085 Yet these two opposites, who seem to be at strife, are of one mind and acting together in agreement

Every prophet and every saint hath a way (of religious doctrine and practice), but it leads to God all (the ways) are (really) one

When slumber (heedlessness) overtook the concentration (attention) of the listener, the water carried the millstones away

The course of this water is above the mill its going into the mill is for your sakes

Since ye had no further need of the mill, he (the prophet or saint) made the water flow back into the original stream

3090 The rational spirit (the Logos) is (coming) to the mouth for the purpose of teaching else (it would not come, for) truly that speech hath a channel apart

It is moving without noise and without repetitions (of sound) to the rose-gardens *beneath which are the rivers*

O God, do Thou reveal to the soul that place where speech is growing without letters,

That the pure soul may make of its head a foot (fly headlong) towards the far-stretching expanse of non-existence—

An expanse very ample and spacious, and from it this phantasy and being (of ours) is fed

3095 (The realm of) phantasies is narrower than non-existence (potential existence) on that account phantasy is the cause of pain

(The realm of actual) existence, again, was (ever) narrower

[1] The letters K and N when united make up the Creative Word *KuN*, 'Be'

than (the realm of) phantasy hence in it moons become like the moon that has waned

Again, the existence of the world of sense and colour is narrower (than this), for 'tis a narrow prison

The cause of narrowness is composition (compoundness) and number (plurality) the senses are moving towards composition

Know that the world of Unification lies beyond sense if you want Unity, march in that direction

The (Divine) Command *KuN* (Be) was a single act, and the 3100
(two letters) N and K occurred (only) in speech, while the (inward) meaning was pure (uncompounded)

This discourse hath no end Return, that (we may see) what happened to the wolf in combat (with the lion)

How the lion punished the wolf who had shown disrespect in dividing (the prey)

That haughty one tore off the head of the wolf, in order that two-headedness (dualism) and distinction might not remain (in being)

'Tis (the meaning of) *So we took vengeance on them*, O old wolf, inasmuch as thou wert not dead in the presence of the Amír

After that, the lion turned to the fox and said, "Divide it (the prey) for breakfast"

He bowed low and said, "This fat ox will be thy food at 3105
breakfast, O excellent King,

And this goat will be a portion reserved for the victorious King at midday,

And the hare too for supper—(to be) the repast at nightfall of the gracious and bountiful King"

Said the lion, "O fox, thou hast made justice shine forth from whom didst thou learn to divide in such a manner?

Whence didst thou learn this, O eminent one?" "O King of the world," he replied, "(I learned it) from the fate of the wolf"

The lion said, "Inasmuch as thou hast become pledged to 3110
love of me, pick up all the three (animals), and take (them) and depart

O fox, since thou hast become entirely mine, how should I hurt thee when thou hast become myself?

I am thine, and all the beasts of chase are thine set thy foot on the Seventh Heaven and mount (beyond)!

Since thou hast taken warning from (the fate of) the vile wolf, thou art not a fox thou art my own lion

The wise man is he that in (the hour of) the shunned tribulation[1] takes warning from the death of his friends"

[1] Literally, 'the trial or calamity against which precautions are taken'

3115 The fox said (to himself), "A hundred thanks to the lion for having called me up after that wolf

If he had bidden me first, saying, 'Do thou divide this,' who would have escaped from him with his life?"

Thanks be to Him (God), then, that He caused us to appear (be born) in the world after those of old,

So that we heard of the chastisements which God inflicted upon the past generations in the preceding time,

That we, like the fox, may keep better watch over ourselves from (considering) the fate of those ancient wolves

3120 On this account he that is God's prophet and veracious in explanation called us "a people on which God has taken mercy"

Behold with clear vision the bones and fur of those wolves, and take warning, O mighty ones!

The wise man will put off from his head (lay aside) this self-existence and wind (of vanity), since he heard (what was) the end of the Pharaohs and 'Ád,

And if he do not put it off, others will take warning from what befell him in consequence of his being misguided

How Noah, on whom be peace, threatened his people, saying, "Do not struggle with me, for I am (only) a veil ye are really struggling with God (who is) within this (veil), O God-forsaken men!"

Noah said, "O ye headstrong ones, I am not I I am dead to the (animal) soul, I am living through the Soul of souls

3125 Inasmuch as I am dead to the senses of the father of mankind (human sense-perceptions), God has become my hearing and perception and sight

Since I am not I, this breath (of mine) is from Him in the presence of this breath if any one breathes (a word) he is an infidel"

In the form of this fox there is the lion 'tis not fitting to advance boldly towards this fox

Unless thou believe in him from his exterior aspect (accept him in the form in which he appears), thou wilt not hear from him the lions' roar

If Noah had not been the Eternal Lion, why should he have cast a whole world into confusion?

3130 He was hundreds of thousands of lions in a single body, he was like fire, and the world (like) a stack

Forasmuch as the stack neglected (to pay) the tithe due to him, he launched such a flame against that stack

Whosoever in the presence of this hidden Lion opens his mouth disrespectfully, like the wolf,

That Lion will tear him to pieces, as (he tore) the wolf, and will recite to him (the text) *So we took vengeance upon them*

He will suffer blows, like the wolf, from the Lion's paw foolish is he that waxed bold in the presence of the Lion

Would that those blows fell upon the body, so that it might be that (the sinner's) faith and heart would be safe!

My power is broken (fails me) on reaching this point how can I declare this mystery?

Make little of your bellies, like that fox do not play fox's tricks in His presence

Lay the whole of your "we" and "I" before Him the kingdom is His kingdom give the kingdom to Him

When ye become poor (selfless) in the right Way, verily the Lion and the Lion's prey are yours,

Because He is holy, and Glory is His attribute He hath no need of good things and kernel or rind

Every prize and every gift of grace that exists is for the sake of the servants of that King (God)

The King hath no desire (for anything) He hath made all this empire for His creatures Happy is he that knew!

Of what use should the possession of empires be to Him who created (all) empire and the two worlds?

In the presence of His Glory keep close watch over your hearts, lest ye be put to shame by thinking evil

For He sees conscience and thought and quest (desire) as (plainly) as a thread of hair in pure milk

He whose clear breast has become devoid of (any) image (impression) has become a mirror for the impressions of the Invisible

He becomes intuitively and undoubtingly aware of our inmost thought, because the true believer is the mirror of the true believer

When he rubs our (spiritual) poverty[1] on the touchstone, then he knows the difference between faith and doubt

When his soul becomes the touchstone of the coin, then he will see (distinguish) the (true) heart and the false money (of hypocrisy)

How kings seat in front of them the Súfís who know God, in order that their eyes may be illumined by (seeing) them

Such is the custom of kings you will have heard of this, if you remember

The paladins stand on their left hand, because the heart (the seat of courage) is fixed on the left side (of the body)

On the right hand are the chancellor and the secretaries, because the science of writing and book-keeping belongs (in practice) to this hand

[1] Cf v 3139 But نقد مارا, "our coin," is perhaps the better reading

They give the Súfís the place in front of their countenance, for they (the Súfis) are a mirror for the soul, and better than a mirror,

(Since) they have polished their breasts (hearts) in commemoration (of God) and meditation, that the heart's mirror may receive the virgin (original) image.

3155 Whoever is born beautiful from the loins of Creation, a mirror must be placed before him.

The beauteous face is in love with the mirror: it (such a face) is a polisher of the soul and (a kindler) of *the fear of God in (men's) hearts*.

How the guest came to Joseph, on whom be peace, and how Joseph demanded of him a gift and present on his return from abroad.

The loving friend came from the ends of the earth and became the guest of Joseph the truthful,

For they had been well acquainted in childhood, reclining (together) on the sofa of acquaintance.

He spoke to him (Joseph) of the injustice and envy of his brethren. Joseph said, "That was (like) a chain, and I was the lion.

3160 The lion is not disgraced by the chain: I do not complain of God's destiny.

If the lion had a chain on his neck, (yet) he was prince over all the chain-makers."

He asked, "How wert thou in regard to the prison and the well?" "Like the moon," said Joseph, "in the interlunar period (when she is) on the wane."

If in that period the new moon is bent double, does not she at last become the full moon in the sky?

Though the seed-pearl is pounded in the mortar, it becomes the light of eye and heart and looks aloft.

3165 They cast a grain of wheat under earth, then from its earth they raised up ears of corn;

Once more they crushed it with the mill: its value increased and it became soul-invigorating bread;

Again they crushed the bread under their teeth: it became the mind and spirit and understanding of one endowed with reason;

Again, when that spirit became lost in Love, it became (as that which) *rejoiceth the sowers* after the sowing.

This discourse hath no end. Come back, that we may see what that good man said to Joseph.

3170 After he (Joseph) had told him his story, he (Joseph) said, "Now, O so-and-so, what traveller's gift hast thou brought for me?"

To come empty-handed to the door of friends is like going without wheat to the mill

God, exalted is He, will say to the people at the gathering (for Judgement), "Where is your present for the Day of Resurrection?

Ye have come to Us and *alone* without provision, just in the same guise as *We created you*

Hark, what have ye brought as an offering—a gift on home-coming for the Day when ye rise from the dead?

Or had ye no hope of returning? Did the promise of (meeting Me) to-day seem vain to you?"

Dost thou (O reader) disbelieve in the promise of being His guest?[1] Then from the kitchen (of His bounty) thou wilt get (only) dust and ashes

And if thou art not disbelieving, how with such empty hands art thou setting foot in the Court of that Friend?

Refrain thyself a little from sleep and food bring the gift for thy meeting with Him

Become scant of sleep (*like them that*) *were slumbering* (*but a small part of the night*), *in the hours of dawn* be *of* (*those who*) *were asking pardon of God*

Stir a little, like the embryo, in order that thou mayst be given the senses which behold the Light,

And (then) thou art outside of this womb-like world thou goest from the earth into a wide expanse

Know that the saying, "God's earth is wide," refers to that ample region into which the saints have entered.

The heart is not oppressed by that spacious expanse there the fresh boughs of the palm-tree do not become dry

At present thou art bearing (the burden of) thy senses thou art becoming weary and exhausted and (ready to fall) headlong

Since, at the time of sleep, thou art borne (on high), and art not bearing (the burden), thy fatigue is gone and thou art free from pain and anguish

Regard the time of sleep as a (mere) taste (sample) in comparison with the state in which the saints are borne (on high)

The saints are (like) the Men of the Cave, O obstinate one *they are asleep* (even) in rising up and turning to and fro

He (God) is drawing them, without their taking trouble to act, without consciousness (on their part), *to the right hand and to the left*

What is that *right hand*? Good deeds What is that *left hand*? The affairs of the body

These two (kinds of) actions proceed from the saints, (while) they are unconscious of them both, like the echo

If the echo causes thee to hear good and evil, the mountain itself is unconscious of either

[1] Reading وعدهٔ مهمانیش را منکری

How the guest said to Joseph, "I have brought thee the gift of a mirror, so that whenever thou lookest in it thou wilt see thine own fair face and remember me"

Joseph said, "Come, produce the gift" He (the guest), on account of shame (confusion) at this demand, sobbed aloud

"How many a gift," said he, "did I seek for thee! No (worthy) gift came into my sight

How should I bring a grain (of gold) to the mine? How should I bring a drop (of water) to the (Sea of) 'Umán?

3195 I shall (only) bring cumin to Kirmán, if I bring my heart and soul (as a gift) to thee

There is no seed that is not in this barn, except thy beauty which hath no equal

I deemed it fitting that I should bring to thee a mirror like the (inward) light of a (pure) breast,

That thou mayst behold thy beauteous face therein, O thou who, like the sun, art the candle of heaven

I have brought thee a mirror, O light (of mine eyes), so that when thou seest thy face thou mayst think of me"

3200 He drew forth the mirror from beneath his arm the fair one's business is with a mirror

What is the mirror of Being? Not-being Bring not-being (as your gift), if you are not a fool

Being can be seen (only) in not-being the rich bestow (exhibit) generosity on the poor

The clear mirror of bread is truly the hungry man, tinder, likewise, is the mirror of that (the stick or flint) from which fire is struck

Not-being and defect, wherever they arise (appear), are the mirror which displays the excellence of all crafts

3205 When a garment is neat and well-stitched, how should it enable the tailor to exhibit his skill[1]?

Trunks of trees must be unhewn in order that the woodcutter may fashion the stem or the branches (and thus exercise his craft)

The doctor who sets broken bones goes to the place where the person with the fractured leg is

How shall the excellence of the art of medicine be made manifest when there is no emaciated invalid?

How shall the (power of the) Elixir be shown if the vileness and baseness of coppers is not notorious?

3210 Defects are the mirror of the quality of perfection, and that vileness is the mirror of power and glory,

Because (every) contrary is certainly made evident by its

[1] Literally how should it be a place for the tailor to display his skill in?

contrary, because honey is perceived (to be sweet by contrast) with vinegar

Whoever has seen and recognised his own deficiency has ridden post-haste[1] (made rapid progress) in perfecting himself

The reason why he (any one) is not flying towards the Lord of glory is that he supposes himself to be perfect

There is no worse malady in your soul, O haughty one, than the conceit of perfection

Much blood must flow from your heart and eye, that self-complacency may go out of you

The fault of Iblís lay in thinking '*I am better* (than Adam),' and this disease is in the soul of every (human) creature

Though he regard himself as very broken (in spirit), know that it is (a case of) clear water (on the surface) and dung under the stream

When he (the Devil) stirs you in trial, immediately the water becomes dung-coloured

There is dung in the bed of the stream, my man, though to you the stream appears pure

'Tis the Pir full of wisdom, well-acquainted with the Way, that digs a channel for (draining off) the streams of the flesh and the body

Can the water of the (polluted) stream clear out the dung? Can man's knowledge sweep away the ignorance of his sensual self?

How shall the sword fashion its own hilt? Go, entrust (the cure of) this wound to a surgeon

Flies gather on every wound, so that no one sees the foulness of his wound

Those flies are your (evil) thoughts and your (love of) possessions your wound is the darkness of your (spiritual) states,

And if the Pír lays a plaster on your wound, at once the pain and lamentation are stilled,

So that you fancy it (the wound) is healed, (whereas in reality) the (healing) ray of the plaster has shone upon the (wounded) spot

Beware! Do not (scornfully) turn your head away from the plaster, O you who are wounded in the back, but recognise that that (healing of the wound) proceeds from the ray do not regard it as (proceeding) from your own constitution

[1] Literally, 'has galloped with two horses'

How the writer of the (Qur'ánic) Revelation fell into apostasy because (when) the ray of the Revelation shot upon him, he recited the (revealed) verse before the Prophet, on whom be peace, (had dictated it to him), then he said, "So I too am one upon whom Revelation has descended"

Before (the time of) 'Uthmán there was a scribe who used to be diligent in writing down the Revelation

Whenever the Prophet dictated the Revelation, he would write out the same (portion) on the leaf

3230 The beams of that Revelation would shine upon him, and he would find Wisdom within him

The substance of that Wisdom was dictated by the Prophet by this (small) amount (of reflected Wisdom) that meddling fool was led astray,

Thinking, "I have in my conscience the Truth of that which the illumined Prophet is saying"

The ray of his thought struck the Prophet the wrath of God descended on his (the scribe's) soul

He abandoned both his work as a scribe and the Religion (Islam) he became the malignant foe of Mustafá (Mohammed) and the Religion

3235 Mustafá said, "O obstinate miscreant, if the Light was from thee, how shouldst thou have become black (with sin)?

If thou hadst been the Divine fountain (whence the Revelation issued), thou wouldst not have let out such black water as this"

Lest his reputation should be ruined in the sight of all and sundry[1], this (pride) kept his mouth shut

His (a sinner's) heart is being darkened, hence he is unable to repent this is wonderful

He (the scribe) was crying "Alas," but "Alas" was of no use to him when the sword came on and took off his head

3240 God has made reputation (to be like) a hundred maunds' weight of iron oh, many a one is bound in the unseen chain!

Pride and infidelity have barred that Way (of repentance) in such wise that he (the sinner) cannot utter a sigh

He (God) said, "(*We have put on their necks*) *shackles* (*chin-high*), *and thereby they are forced to lift up their heads*" those shackles are not (put) on us from outside

"(*And We have put*) *behind them a barrier, and We have made a covering* (*of darkness*) *over them*" the uncle (old sinner) is not seeing the barrier in front (of him) and behind

The barrier that arose has the appearance of open country[2] he does not know that it is the barrier of the Divine destiny

[1] Literally in the sight of this one and that one

[2] Literally the desert or the wide plain i e the barrier is invisible to the sensual eye

Your (earthly) beloved is a barrier to the face of the (Divine) 3245
Beloved your (worldly) guide is a barrier to the words of the (true spiritual) guide

Oh, many are the infidels that have a passionate longing for the Religion (Islam) his (such a one's) chain (stumbling-block) is reputation and pride and that and this (object of desire)

The chain is hidden, but 'tis worse than iron the iron chain is cloven by the axe

The iron chain can be removed none knows how to cure the invisible chain

If a man is stung by a wasp, he extracts the wasp's sting from his body,

But since the stinging wound is from (inflicted by) your self- 3250
existence, the pain continues with violence and the anguish is not relieved

The (full) explanation of this (matter) is springing forth (seeking to escape) from my breast, but I am afraid it may give (you cause to) despair

Nay, do not despair make yourself cheerful, call for help to Him who comes at the call,

Saying, "Forgive us, O Thou who lovest to forgive, O Thou who hast a medicine for the old gangrenous disease!"

The reflexion of Wisdom led astray that miserable one (the Prophet's scribe) be not self-conceited, lest it (your self-conceit) raise up the dust from you (utterly destroy you)

O brother, Wisdom is flowing in upon you it comes from 3255
the *Abdal*[1], and in you it is (only) a borrowed thing

Although the house (your heart) has found a light within it, that (light) has shone forth from a light-giving neighbour

Render thanks, be not beguiled by vanity, do not turn up your nose (in disdain)[2], hearken attentively, and do not show any self-conceit

'Tis a hundred pities and griefs that this borrowed (unreal) state (of self-assertion) has put the religious communities far from religious communion

I am the (devoted) slave of him who does not regard himself in every caravanseray (at every stage in his spiritual progress) as having attained to (the privilege of sitting at) the table (of union with God)

Many is the caravanseray that must be quitted, in order that 3260
one day the man may reach home

Though the iron has become red, it is not red (by nature) it (the redness) is a ray borrowed from something that strikes fire

If the window or the house is full of light, do not deem aught luminous except the sun

[1] See p 18, note
[2] Literally, 'do not make a nose'

Every door and wall says, "I am luminous I do not hold the rays of another, I (myself) am this (light)"

Then the sun says, "O thou who art not right (in thy belief), when I set 'twill become evident (thou wilt see what the truth is)"

3265 The plants say, "We are green of ourselves, we are gay and smiling (blooming) and we are tall (by nature)"

The season of summer says (to them), "O peoples, behold yourselves when I depart!"

The body is boasting of its beauty and comeliness, (while) the spirit, having concealed its glory and pinions and plumes,

Says to it, "O dunghill, who art thou? Through my beams thou hast come to life for a day or two

Thy coquetry and prideful airs are not contained in the world (go beyond all bounds), (but) wait till I spring up (and escape) from thee!

3270 They whose love warmed thee will dig a grave for thee, they will make thee a morsel for ants and reptiles

That one who many a time in thy presence was dying (with desire for thee) will hold his nose at thy stench"

The beams of the spirit are speech and eye and ear the beam (effect) of fire is the bubbling in the water

As the beam of the spirit falls on the body, so fall the beams of the *Abdal* on my soul

When the Soul of the soul withdraws from the soul, the soul becomes even as the soulless (lifeless) body Know (this for sure)!

3275 For that reason I am laying my head (humbly) on the earth, so that she (the earth) may be my witness on the Day of Judgement

On the Day of Judgement, when *she shall be made to quake mightily*, this earth will bear witness to all that passed (in and from us),

For *she will* plainly *declare what she knows* earth and rocks will begin to speak

The philosopher, in his (vain) thought and opinion, becomes disbelieving bid him go and dash his head against this wall!

The speech of water, the speech of earth, and the speech of mud are apprehended by the senses of them that have hearts (the mystics)

3280 The philosopher who disbelieves in the moaning pillar[1] is a stranger to the senses of the saints

He says that the beam (influence) of melancholia brings many phantasies into people's minds

Nay but the reflexion of his wickedness and infidelity cast this idle fancy of scepticism upon him

[1] See p 115

The philosopher comes to deny the existence of the Devil, and at the same time he is possessed by a devil

If thou hast not seen the Devil, behold thyself without diabolic possession there is no blueness in the forehead

Whosoever hath doubt and perplexity in his heart, he in this 3285
world is a secret philosopher

He is professing firm belief, but some time or other that philosophical vein will blacken his face (bring him to shame)

Take care, O ye Faithful! for that (vein) is in you in you is many an infinite world

In thee are all the two-and-seventy sects woe (to thee) if one day they gain the upper hand over thee

From fear of this, every one who has the fortune (*barg*) of (holding) this Faith (Islam) is trembling like a leaf (*barg*)

Thou hast laughed at Iblis and the devils because thou hast 3290
regarded thyself as a good man

When the soul shall turn its coat inside out (and be revealed as it really is), how many a "Woe is me" will it extort from the followers of the (Mohammedan) Religion!

On the counter (of the shop) everything (every gilded coin) that looks like gold is smiling, because the touchstone is out of sight

O Coverer (of faults), do not lift up the veil from us, be a protector to us in our test (on the Day of Judgement)

At night the false coin jostles (in rivalry) with the gold the gold is waiting for day

With the tongue of its (inward) state the gold says[1], "Wait, 3295
O tinselled one, till day rises clear"

Hundreds of thousands of years the accursed Iblis was a saint and the prince of true believers,

On account of the pride which he had, he grappled with Adam and was put to shame, like dung at morningtide

How Bal'am son of Ba'ur prayed (to God), saying, "Cause Moses and his people to turn back, without having gained their desire, from this city which they have besieged"

To Bal'am son of Ba'ur the people of the world became subject, (for he was) like unto the Jesus of the time

They bowed (worshipfully) to none but him his spell was (giving) health to the sick

From pride and (conceit of) perfection he grappled with 3300
Moses his plight became such as thou hast heard

Even so there have been in the world, manifest or hidden, a hundred thousand like Iblis and Bal'am

God caused these twain to be notorious, that these twain might bear witness against the rest

[1] *I e* the gold, without words, seems to say'

These two thieves He hanged on a high gallows (to be a warning to all), else there were many (other) thieves in (the pale of) His vengeance

These twain He dragged by their forelocks to the city (for slaughter), (but) 'tis impossible to number (all) the victims of His wrath

You are a favourite (of God), but within your (due) bounds (Fear) God, (fear) God, do not set foot beyond (those) bounds

If you combat with one who is a greater favourite than yourself, 'twill bring you down to the lowest depth of the seventh earth

For what purpose is the tale of 'Ád and Thamúd? That you may know that the prophets have disdain (for the wicked)

These signs—the (earth's) swallowing up (sinners), the hurling of stones (upon them), and the thunderbolts—were evidence of the might of the Rational Soul

Kill all animals for the sake of man, kill all mankind for the sake of Reason

What is Reason? The Universal Intelligence of the man (prophet or saint) endowed with reason Partial reason is reason (too), but it is infirm

All the animals that are wild (unfriendly) to man are inferior to the human animal

Their blood is free[1] to mankind, since they have not become capable of human actions

The honour of the wild animals is fallen (has come to be of no account) because they have grown hostile to man

What honour, then, will be thine, O marvel (of folly), since thou hast become (*like*) *timorous wild asses*[2]?

Because of his usefulness, the (domesticated) ass ought not to be killed, (but) when he turns wild, his blood becomes lawful

Although the ass had no knowledge to restrain him (from becoming wild), the Loving One is not excusing him at all

How, then, shall man be excused, O noble friend, when he has become wild (refractory and hostile) to that Word (the voice of Reason)?

Of necessity permission was given to shed the blood of the infidels, like (that of) a wild beast before the arrows and lances

All their wives and children are free spoil, because they are wildly averse to the august Reason

Once more, a reason that flees from the Reason of reason (Universal Reason) is transported from rationality to (the grade of) the animals

[1] Literally, 'in the way (of God)," i.e. their slaughter is a religious act which God has sanctioned and approved

[2] *I.e.* 'since thou hast turned away from the prophets and saints"

How Hárút and Márút relied upon their immaculateness and desired to mix with the people of this world and fell into temptation

As (for example), because of their arrogance, the celebrated Hárút and Márut were smitten by the poisoned arrow (of Divine wrath)

They had confidence in their holiness, (but) what (use) is it for the buffalo to have confidence in the lion?

Though he make a hundred shifts (to defend himself) with his horn, the fierce lion will tear him to pieces limb by limb

(Even) if he become as full of horns (prickles) as a hedgehog, the buffalo will inevitably be killed by the lion

(But) though the Sarsar wind uproots many trees, it makes every blade of grass glisten with beauty 3325

That violent wind had pity on the weakness of the grass do not thou, O heart, brag vainly of thy strength

How should the axe be afraid of the thickness of the branches? It cuts them to pieces

But it does not beat itself against a leaf, it does not beat its edge except against an edge (something hard and solid like itself)

What does the flame care for the great quantity of firewood? How should the butcher flee in terror from the multitude of sheep?

What is form in the presence of (in comparison with) reality? Very feeble 'Tis the reality of the sky that keeps it upside down (like an inverted cup) 3330

Judge by the analogy of the celestial wheel from whom does its motion proceed? From directive Reason

The motion of this shield-like body is (derived) from the veiled spirit, O son

The motion of this wind is from its reality, like the wheel that is captive to the water of the stream

The ebb and flow and incoming and outgoing of this breath —from whom does it proceed but from the spirit that is filled with desire?

Now it (the spirit) makes it (the breath) *jím*, now *há* and *dál*, now it makes it peace, now strife 3335

Even so our God had made this (Sarsar) wind like a (raging) dragon against 'Ád

Again, He had also made that wind (to be) peace and regardfulness and safety for the true believers

"The Reality is Allah," said the Shaykh of the (Mohammedan) Religion, (who is) the sea of the spiritual realities of the Lord of created beings

All the tiers of earth and heaven are (but) as straws in that flowing sea

The rushing and tossing of the straws in the water is produced by the water when it is agitated

When it (the sea of Reality) wishes to make them (the straws) cease from struggling, it casts the straws toward the shore

When it draws them from the shore into the surge it does with them that which the Sarsar (wind) does with the grass

This topic is endless Speed back, O youth, to (the story of) Hárút and Márút

The rest of the story of Hárút and Marut, and how an exemplary punishment was inflicted on them, even in this world, in the pit of Babylon

Inasmuch as the sin and wickedness of the people of the world was becoming clearly visible to them both from the latticed window (of Heaven),

They began to gnaw their hands in wrath, but had no eyes for their own fault

The ugly man saw himself in the mirror he turned his face away from that (spectacle) and was enraged

When the self-conceited person has seen any one commit a sin, there appears in him a fire (derived) from Hell

He calls that (hellish) pride defence of the Religion he regards not the soul of arrogance in himself

Defence of the Religion has a different character, for from that (religious) fire a (whole) world is green (verdant and flourishing)

God said to them, "If ye are enlightened[1], (nevertheless) look not (with scorn) upon the doers of black deeds who have been made forgetful (of God)

Render thanks, O Host (of Heaven) and Servants (of God)! Ye are freed from lust and sexual intercourse

If I impose that kind of nature on you, Heaven will accept you no more

The preservation (from sin) which ye have in your bodies is from the reflexion of My preservation and care (of you)

Oh, beware! Regard that as (coming) from Me, not from yourselves, lest the accursed Devil prevail against you"

As (for example) the writer of the Revelation given to the Prophet deemed the Wisdom and the Original Light (to be residing) in himself

He was reckoning himself a fellow-songster of the Birds of God, (whereas) that (which proceeded from him) was (only) a whistle resembling an echo

[1] Literally, "polishers"

If you become an exponent (imitator) of the song of birds, how will you become acquainted with the (real) meaning of the bird?

If you learn the note of a nightingale, how will you know what (feelings) it has towards a rose?

Or if you do know, 'twill be from analogy and surmise, like the conjectures formed by deaf people from those who move their lips

How the deaf man went to visit his sick neighbour

One possessed of much wealth said to a deaf man, "A neighbour of thine is fallen ill"

The deaf man said to himself, "Being hard of hearing, what shall I understand of the words spoken by that youth?—

Especially (as) he is ill and his voice is weak, but I must go thither, there's no escape

When I see his lips moving, I will form a conjecture as to that (movement) from myself

When I say, 'How are you, O my suffering (friend)?' he will reply, 'I am fine' or 'I am pretty well'

I will say, 'Thanks (to God)! What posset have you had to drink?' He will reply, 'Some sherbet' or 'a decoction of kidney-beans'

(Then) I will say, 'May you enjoy health! Who is the doctor attending you?' He will answer, 'So-and-so'

'He is one who brings great luck with him[1],' I will remark, 'since he has come, things will go well for you

I have experienced (the luck of) his foot wherever he goes, the desired object is attained'"

The good man made ready these conjectural answers, and went to see the invalid

"How are you?" he asked "I am at the point of death," said he "Thanks (to God)!" cried the deaf man At this, the patient became resentful and indignant,

Saying (to himself), "What (cause for) thanksgiving is this? He has been my enemy"—The deaf man made a conjecture, and (as now appears) it has turned out to be wrong

After that, he asked him what he had drunk "Poison," said he "May it do you good and give you health!" said the deaf man His (the invalid's) wrath increased

Then he inquired, "Which of the doctors is it that is coming to attend you?"

He replied, "Azrael (the Angel of Death) is coming Get you gone!" "His foot (arrival)," said the deaf man, "is very blessed be glad!"

[1] Literally, "one whose foot is very blest"

3375 The deaf man went forth He said gaily, "Thanks (to God) for that! Now I will take leave "

The invalid said, "This is my mortal foe I did not know he was (such) a mine of iniquity "

The mind of the invalid was seeking a hundred abusive terms, that he might send him a message (filled with abuse) of every description,

As, when any one has eaten bad (indigestible) food, it is turning his heart (stomach) until he vomits

Suppression of anger is (like) this do not vomit it, so that you may gain sweet words in recompense

3380 Since he had no patience, he was tormented "Where," he cried, "is this cur, this infamous cuckold,

That I may pour upon him what he said (make a retort in his own style)?—for at that time the lion of my thought was asleep (I was too weak to contend with him)

Inasmuch as visiting the sick is for the purpose of (giving them) tranquillity, this is not a visit to the sick it is the satisfaction of an enemy's wish

(His motive was) that he should see his enemy enfeebled and that his wicked heart should be at peace "

Many are they that do works of devotion and set their hearts on being approved and rewarded for the same

3385 'Tis in truth a lurking sin that which he (the pietist) thinks pure is (really) foul,

As (in the case of) the deaf man, who fancied that he did a kindness, but it had the opposite result

He sits down well-pleased, saying, "I have paid my respects, I have performed what was due to my neighbour",

(But) he has (only) kindled a fire (of resentment) against himself in the invalid's heart and burned himself

Beware, then, of the fire that ye have kindled verily ye have increased in sin

3390 The Prophet said to our desert Arab, "Pray [1], for indeed thou hast not prayed (aright), my man "

As a means of preventing these dangers, "*Guide us*" comes in every (ritual) prayer,

That is to say, "O God, do not mingle my prayer with the prayer of the erring and the hypocrites "

By the analogical reasoning which the deaf man adopted a ten years' friendship was made vain

Especially, O master, (you must avoid) the analogy drawn by the low senses in regard to the Revelation which is illimitable

3395 If your sensuous ear is fit for (understanding) the letter (of the Revelation), know that your ear that receives the occult [2] (meaning) is deaf

[1] *I e* "perform the ritual prayer " [2] Read غيب گير

The first to bring analogical reasoning to bear against the Revealed Text was Iblís

The first person who produced these paltry analogies in the presence of the Lights of God[1] was Iblís

He said, "Beyond doubt fire is superior to earth I am of fire, and he (Adam) is of dingy earth

Let us, then, judge by comparing the secondary with its principal he is of darkness, I of radiant light"

God said, "Nay, but on the contrary *there shall be no relationships* asceticism and piety shall be the (sole) avenue[2] to pre-eminence"

This is not the heritage of the fleeting world, so that thou shouldst gain it by ties of relationship 'tis a spiritual (heritage)

Nay, these things are the heritage of the prophets, the inheritors of these are the spirits of the devout

The son of Bu Jahl became a true believer for all to see, the son of Noah became one of those who lost the way

"The child of earth (Adam) became illumined like the moon, thou art the child of fire get thee gone with thy face black (in disgrace)!"

The wise man has made (use of) such reasonings and investigation on a cloudy day or at night for the sake of (finding) the *qibla*,

But with the sun and with the Ka'ba before your face, do not seek to reason and investigate in this manner

Do not pretend that you cannot see the Ka'ba, do not avert your face from it because you have reasoned (that it is not to be seen) God knows best what is right

When you hear a pipe from the Bird of God, you commit its outward (meaning) to memory, like a lesson,

And then from yourself (out of your own head) you make some analogies you make (what is) mere fancy into a (thing of) substance (reality)

The *Abdál* have certain mystical expressions of which the doctrines (of external religion) are ignorant

You have learned the birds' language by the sound (alone), you have kindled (invented) a hundred analogies and a hundred caprices

The hearts (of the saints) are wounded by you, as the invalid (was hurt by the deaf man), (while) the deaf man became intoxicated (overjoyed) with the vain notion of success

[1] *I e* the Word of God

[2] Literally, "the *mihráb* or niche (of a mosque)," which shows the direction that the Moslem must face in prayer

The writer of the Revelation, from (hearing) the Bird's voice, supposed that he was the Bird's equal.

The Bird flapped a wing and blinded him: lo, it plunged him in the abyss of death and bale.

"Beware! do not ye also[1], (beguiled) by a reflexion or an opinion, fall from the dignities of Heaven!

3415 Although ye are Hárút and Márút and superior to all (the angels) on the terrace of *We are they that stand in ranks*,

(Yet) take mercy on the wickednesses of the wicked: do not cleave to egoism and self-conceit.

Beware, lest (the Divine) jealousy come from ambush and ye fall headlong to the bottom of the earth."

They both said, "O God, Thine is the command: without Thy security (protection) where indeed is any security?"

They were saying that, but their hearts were throbbing (with desire)—"How should evil come from us? Good servants (of God) are we!"

3420 The prick of desire in the two angels did not leave (them) until it sowed the seed of self-conceit.

Then they were saying, "O ye that are composed of the (four) elements (and are) unacquainted with the purity of the spiritual beings,

We will draw curtains (of light) over this (terrestrial) sky, we will come to earth and set up the canopy,

We will deal justice and perform worship and every night we will fly up again to Heaven,

That we may become the wonder of the world, that we may establish safety and security on the earth."

3425 The analogy between the state of Heaven and (that of) the earth is inexact: it has a concealed difference.

Explaining that one must keep one's own (spiritual) state and (mystical) intoxication hidden from the ignorant.

Hearken to the words of the Sage (Hakím) who lived in seclusion[2], "Lay thy head in the same place where thou hast drunk the wine."

When the drunken man has gone astray from a tavern, he becomes the children's laughing-stock and plaything.

Whatever way he goes[3], he is falling in the mud, (now) on this side and (now) on that side, and every fool is laughing at him.

He (goes on) like this, while the children at his heels are without knowledge of his intoxication and the taste of his wine.

3430 All mankind are children except him that is intoxicated with

[1] Here God is addressing Hárut and Márut.
[2] Literally, "the Sage of a purdah." The poet Saná'í is meant.
[3] Literally, "on every road."

God, none is grown-up except him that is freed from sensual desire

He (God) said, "This world is a play and pastime, and ye are children", and God speaks truth

If you have not gone forth from (taken leave of) play, you are a child without purity of spirit how will you be fully intelligent (like an adult)?

Know, O youth, that the lust in which men are indulging here (in this world) is like the sexual intercourse of children

What is the child's sexual intercourse? An idle play, compared with the sexual intercourse of a Rustam and a brave champion of Islam

The wars of mankind are like children's fights—all meaningless, pithless, and contemptible

All their fights are (fought) with wooden swords, all their purposes are (centred) in futility,

They all are riding on a reed-cane (hobby-horse), saying, "This is our Buráq[1] or mule that goes like Duldul[2] "

They are (really) carrying (their hobby-horses), but in their folly they have raised themselves on high they have fancied themselves to be riders carried along the road

Wait till the day when those who are borne aloft by God shall pass, galloping, beyond the nine tiers (of Heaven)!

"*The spirit and the angels shall ascend to Him*" at the ascension of the spirit Heaven shall tremble

Like children, ye all are riding on your skirts ye have taken hold of the corner of your skirt (to serve) as a horse

From God came (the text), "*Verily, opinion doth not enable (you) to dispense (with the Truth)*" when did the steed of opinion run (mount) to the Heavens?

While preferring (in case of doubt) the stronger of the two (alternative) opinions, do not doubt whether you see the sun when it is shining!

At that time (when the spirit returns to God) behold your steeds! Ye have made a steed of your own foot

Come, recognise that your imagination and reflection and sense-perception and apprehension are like the reed-cane on which children ride

The sciences of the mystics[3] bear them (aloft), the sciences of sensual men[4] are burdens to them

When knowledge strikes on the heart (is acquired through mystical experience), it becomes a helper (*yárí*), when knowledge strikes on the body (is acquired through the senses), it becomes a burden (*bárí*)

[1] The animal ridden by the Prophet when he ascended to Heaven
[2] A mule belonging to the Prophet
[3] Literally, the men of heart
[4] Literally, "the men of body"

God hath said, "(*Like an ass*) *laden with his books*" burdensome is the knowledge that is not from Himself

The knowledge that is not immediately from Himself does not endure, (it is) like the tirewoman's paint

3450 But when you carry this burden well, the burden will be removed and you will be given (spiritual) joy

Beware! Do not carry this burden of knowledge for the sake of selfish desire (but mortify yourself), so that you may ride on the smooth-paced steed of knowledge,

So that you may mount the smooth-paced steed of knowledge, (and that) afterwards the burden may fall from your shoulder

How wilt thou be freed from selfish desires without the cup of *Hu* (Him), O thou who hast become content with no more of *Hu* than the name of *Hu*?

From attribute and name what comes to birth? Phantasy, and that phantasy shows the way to union with Him

3455 Hast thou ever seen a subject that shows without (the existence of) an object that is shown unless there is the road, there can never be the ghoul (which entices travellers to stray from the road).

Hast thou ever seen a name without the reality (denoted by the name)? Or hast thou plucked a rose (*gul*) from the (letters) *gáf* and *lám* of (the word) *gul*?

Thou hast pronounced the name go, seek the thing named Know that the moon is on high, not in the water of the stream

If thou wouldst pass beyond name and letter, oh, make thyself wholly purged of self

Like (polished) iron, lose the ferruginous colour, become in thy ascetic discipline (like) a mirror without rust

3460 Make thyself pure from the attributes of self, that thou mayst behold thine own pure untarnished essence,

And behold within thy heart (all) the sciences of the prophets, without book and without preceptor and master

The Prophet said, "Amongst my people are some who are one with me in nature and aspiration

Their spirits behold me by the same light by which I am beholding them"

Without the two *Ṣahíhs*[1] and Traditions and Traditionists, nay, (they behold him) in the place where they drink the Water of Life

3465 Know the secret of "In the evening I was a Kurd", read the mystery of "In the morning I was an Arab"

And if you desire a parable of the hidden knowledge, relate the story of the Greeks and the Chinese

[1] The title *Ṣaḥíḥ* is given to two works, by Bukhárí and Muslim, which contain well-authenticated Traditions of the Prophet

The story of the contention between the Greeks and the Chinese in the art of painting and picturing

The Chinese said, "We are the better artists", the Greeks said, "The (superiority in) power and excellence belongs to us"

"I will put you to the test in this matter," said the Sultan, "(and see) which of you are approved in your claim"

The Chinese and the Greeks began to debate the Greeks retired from the debate

(Then) the Chinese said, "Hand over to us a particular room, and (let there be) one for you (as well)"

There were two rooms with door facing door the Chinese took one, the Greeks the other

The Chinese requested the King to give them a hundred colours the King opened his treasury that they might receive that (which they sought)

Every morning, by (his) bounty, the colours were dispensed from the treasury to the Chinese

The Greeks said, "No tints and colours are proper for our work, (nothing is needed) except to remove the rust"

They shut the door and went on burnishing they became clear and pure like the sky

There is a way from many-colouredness to colourlessness colour is like the clouds, and colourlessness is a moon

Whatsoever light and splendour you see in the clouds, know that it comes from the stars and the moon and the sun

When the Chinese had finished their work, they were beating drums for joy

The King entered and saw the pictures there that (sight), as he encountered it, was robbing him of his wits

After that, he came towards the Greeks they removed the intervening curtain

The reflexion of those (Chinese) pictures and works (of art) struck upon these walls which had been made pure (from stain)

All that he had seen there (in the Chinese room) seemed more beautiful here 'twas snatching the eye from the socket

The Greeks, O father, are the Sufis (they are) without (independent of) study and books and erudition,

But they have burnished their breasts (and made them) pure from greed and cupidity and avarice and hatreds

That purity of the mirror is, beyond doubt, the heart which receives images innumerable

That Moses (the perfect saint) holds in his bosom the formless infinite form of the Unseen (reflected) from the mirror of his heart

Although that form is not contained in Heaven, nor in the

empyrean nor in the sphere of the stars, nor (in the earth which rests) on the Fish,

Because (all) those are bounded and numbered—(yet is it contained in the heart) know that the mirror of the heart hath no bound

Here the understanding becomes silent or (else) it leads into error, because the heart is with Him (God), or indeed the heart is He

The reflexion of every image shines unto everlasting from the heart alone, both with plurality and without

Unto everlasting every new image that falls on it (the heart) is appearing therein without any imperfection

They that burnish (their hearts) have escaped from (mere) scent and colour they behold Beauty at every moment without tarrying

They have relinquished the form and husk of knowledge, they have raised the banner of the eye of certainty[1]

Thought is gone, and they have gained light they have gained the throat (core and essence) and the sea (ultimate source) of gnosis

Death, of which all these (others) are sore afraid, this people (the perfect Sufis) are holding in derision

None gains the victory over their hearts the hurt falls on the oyster-shell, not on the pearl

Though they have let go grammar (*nahw*) and jurisprudence (*fiqh*), yet they have taken up (instead) mystical self-effacement (*mahw*) and spiritual poverty (*faqr*)

Ever since the forms of the Eight Paradises have shone forth, they have found the tablets of their (the Sufis') hearts receptive

(They receive) a hundred impressions from the empyrean and the starry sphere and the void what impressions? Nay, 'tis the very sight of God

How the Prophet, on whom be peace, asked Zayd, "How art thou to-day and in what state hast thou risen?" and how Zayd answered him, saying, "This morning I am a true believer, O Messenger of Allah"

One morning the Prophet said to Zayd, "How art thou this morning, O sincere Companion?"

He replied, "(This morning I am) a faithful servant of God" Again he (the Prophet) said to him, "Where is thy token from the garden of Faith, if it has bloomed?"

He said, "I have been athirst in the daytime, at night I have not slept because of love and burning griefs,

[1] I.e. mystical intuition

So that I passed through (and beyond) day and night, as the point of the spear passes through the shield,

For beyond (the realm of contraries) nativity and continued growth are one hundreds of thousands of years are the same as a single hour

Everlastingness and eternity are unified (yonder) the understanding hath no way thither by means of inquiry "

The Prophet said, "Where is the traveller's gift (that thou hast brought home) from this journey? Produce it Where is the token of sincerity (that thou hast brought) from yon fair land?"

Zayd said, "When (other) people see the sky, I behold the Empyrean with those who dwell there

The Eight Paradises and the Seven Hells are as visible to me as the idol to the idolater

I am distinguishing the people (here), one by one, like wheat from barley in the mill,

So that who is for Paradise and who shall be a stranger (to Paradise) is as clear to me as (the difference between) snake and fish "

The day of birth for Anatolians and Ethiopians and every race (of mankind) is *the Day when faces shall become white or black*[1]

Before this (birth), however sinful the spirit was, it was in the womb (of the body) and was hidden from the people

The damned are they that are damned in the mother's womb all of them are known by the marks of God

The body, like a mother, is big with the spirit-child death is the pangs and throes of birth

All the spirits that have passed over (to the next life) are waiting to see in what state that proud spirit shall be born

The Ethiopians (the damned spirits) say, "It belongs to us", the Anatolians (the blessed spirits) say, "Nay, it is comely "

As soon as it is born into the world of spirit and (Divine) grace, there is no further difference (of opinion) between the whites (the blessed) and the blacks (the damned)

If it is an Ethiopian (a damned spirit), the Ethiopians carry it off, and if it is an Anatolian (a blessed spirit), the Anatolians lead it away

Until it is born (into the next life), it is a riddle for (all) the world few are they that know (the destiny of) the unborn

Such a one surely is seeing by the light of God, for he has the way (the means of knowing what is hidden) within the skin

Principium aquae seminis candidum est et pulchrum, but the reflexion of the spirit, (whether the spirit be) Anatolian or Ethiopian,

[1] The Day of Resurrection

Is giving colour (glory) to *those* (the Anatolians) ***who are most excellent in their (original) constitution***, (while) it is bearing this (other) half (*i e* the Ethiopians) down to the lowest depth

This discourse hath no end Hasten back, that we may not be left behind by the caravan's file of camels

On the Day when faces shall become white or black, by whom shall reverence still be paid to Turk and Hindoo (alike)?

In the womb (of this world) Hindoo and Turk are not distinguishable, (but) when each is born (into the next world) he (the seer) sees that each is miserable or glorious (according to his spiritual nature)

"I am seeing them all plainly, as (they shall be) on the Day of Resurrection, like (multitudes of) people, men and women

Hark, shall I tell or shall I stop my breath (keep silence)?" Muṣṭafá (Mohammed) bit his (Zayd's) lip, as though to say, "Enough!"

"O Messenger of Allah, shall I tell the mystery of the Gathering (on the Day of Judgement), shall I make the Resurrection manifest in the world to-day?

Let me be, that I may rend the curtains asunder, that my (spiritual) substance may shine forth like a sun,

That the sun may be eclipsed by me, that I may show (the difference between) the (fruitful) date-palm and the (barren) willow

I will show forth the mystery of Resurrection, the sterling coin and the coin mixed with alloy,

The people of the left[1] with their hands cut off, I will show forth the colour of infidelity and the colour of the (Prophet's) folk

I will lay bare the seven rifts (sins) of hypocrisy in the light of the moon that suffers no eclipse or waning

I will display the woollen frocks of the damned, I will cause the drums and kettle-drums of the prophets to be heard

Hell and the Gardens (of Paradise) and the intermediate state I will bring clearly before the eyes of the infidels

I will display the pond of Kawthar heaving (with waves), which dashes water on their (the blessed ones') faces, (while) its sound (rings) in their ears,

And those who are running athirst round Kawthar I will name one by one (and tell) who they are

Their shoulders are rubbing against my shoulder, their cries are piercing my ears

Before my eyes the people of Paradise, from free choice, clasp each other to their bosoms,

Visiting one another's high places of honour and snatching kisses from the lips (of the houris)

[1] The damned

This ear of mine has become deafened by the cries of 'Alas, Alas!' (uttered) by the vile wretches (in Hell) and by the screams of 'O sorrow!'

These are (only) hints I would speak from the depth (of my knowledge), but I fear to offend the Messenger (of Allah)"

He was speaking in this wise, intoxicated and distraught the Prophet twitched his collar

And said, "Beware! Draw (rein), for thy horse has become hot (When) the reflexion of *God is not ashamed* (*to speak the truth*) strikes (on the heart), shame is gone

Thy mirror has shot out of the case how shall mirror and balance speak falsehood?

How shall mirror and balance stop their breath (suppress the truth) for fear of hurting and shaming any one?

Mirror and balance are noble touchstones if thou do service (sue) to them for two hundred years,

Saying, 'Conceal the truth for my sake, display the surplus and do not display the deficiency,'

They will say to thee, 'Do not laugh at thy beard and moustache mirror and balance, and then deceit and trickery!'[1]

Since God has raised us up in order that by means of us it may be possible to know the truth,

If this do not happen (if we fail to display the truth), what worth have we, O young man? How shall we become a standard for the face of the fair?'

But (said the Prophet) slip the mirror (back) into the cloth, if (Divine) illumination has made thy breast a Sinai"

He (Zayd) said, "Why, shall the Sun of the Truth and the Sun of Eternity be contained any wise under the armpit?

It bursts asunder both armpit (*baghal*) and imposture (*daghal*), in its presence neither madness nor (soundness of) understanding remains"

He (the Prophet) said, "When thou layest one finger on an eye, thou seest the world empty of the sun

One finger-tip becomes a veil over the moon – and this is a symbol of God's covering—

So that the (whole) world may be covered (hidden from view) by a single point, and the sun be eclipsed by a splinter"

Close thy lips and gaze on the depth of the sea (within thee) God made the sea subject to man,

Even as the fountains of Salsabíl and Zanjabíl are under the control of the exalted ones of Paradise

The four rivers of Paradise are under our control, this is not (by) our might, 'tis (by) the command of God

We keep them flowing wheresoever we will, like magic (which takes its course) according to the desire of the magicians,

[1] *I.e.* "The idea that mirror and balance should deceive is absurd"

Just as these two flowing eye-fountains (the two ey under the control of the heart and subject to the comn the spirit

If it (the heart) will, they turn towards poison and the and if it will, they turn to (edifying) consideration

If it will, they turn to sensuous things, and if it wi turn to things clothed (in the forms of thought and ph

3565 If it will, they advance towards universals, and if it wi remain turned towards particulars

Similarly all the five senses are passing (in moveme cording to the will and command of the heart, like th (in the hand of a weaver)

All the five senses are moving and trailing their skirts (ing along) in whatever direction the heart indicates to t

Hand and foot are plainly under command of the hea the staff in the hand of Moses

If the heart will, at once the foot begins to dance, from defect towards increase

3570 If the heart will, the hand comes to terms with the to write a book

The hand remains in (the grasp of) a hidden hand hidden hand) within has set the body outside (as its instru

If it (the hidden hand) will, it (the external hand) bec snake to the enemy, and if it will, it becomes a helper to the

And if it will, a spoon in food, and if it will, a mace w ten maunds

I wonder what the heart is saying to them (the mem the body) 'Tis a marvellous connexion, a marvellous hidd

3575 Surely the heart has gotten the seal of Solomon, so has pulled the reins of (exerted control over) the five se

Five external senses are easy for it to manage, five i senses (faculties) are under its command

There are ten senses and seven limbs (of the body) *et* count over (to yourself) what is not mentioned (here)

O heart, since thou art a Solomon in empire, cast th ring (powerful spell) upon peri and demon

If in this kingdom thou art free from deceit, the three c will not take the seal out of thy hand,

3580 After that, thy name will conquer the world the two (will be) ruled by thee like thy body

And if the demon take the seal off thy hand, thy king past, thy fortune is dead,

After that, O servants (of God), "O sorrow!" is yo evitable doom till the day when ye are gathered togeth Judgement)

And if thou art denying thy deceit, how wilt thou sa soul from the scales and the mirror?

How suspicion was thrown upon Luqmán by the slaves and fellow-servants who said that he had eaten the fresh fruit which they were bringing (to their master)

In the eyes of his master, amongst (in comparison with) the (other) slaves, Luqmán was despicable on account of his body (outward aspect)

He (the master) used to send the slaves to the garden, that fruit might come (be brought to him) for his pleasure

Amongst the slaves Luqmán was (despised) like a parasite, (he was) full of (spiritual) ideas, dark-complexioned as night

Those slaves, being impelled by greed, ate the whole of the fruit with enjoyment,

And told their master that Luqmán had eaten it, (whereupon) the master became bitter and sorely displeased with Luqmán

When Luqmán inquired (and ascertained) the cause (of this), he opened his lips to reproach his master

"O sire," said Luqmán, "an unfaithful servant is not approved in the sight of God

Put us all to the test, O noble sir give us our fill of hot water (to drink),

And afterwards make us run into a great plain, thou being mounted and we on foot

Then behold the evil-doer, (behold) the things that are done by Him who revealeth mysteries!"

The master gave the servants hot water to drink, and they drank it in fear (of him)

Afterwards he was driving them into the plains, and they were running amidst the cornfields

From distress they began to vomit the (hot) water was bringing up the fruit from them

When Luqmán began to vomit from his navel (belly), there was coming up from within him (only) the pure water

Inasmuch as Luqmán's wisdom can show forth this, then what must be the wisdom of the Lord of existence!

On the day when all *the inmost thoughts shall be searched out*, there will appear from you something latent, (the appearance of) which is not desired

When *they shall be given hot water to drink*, all the veils will be cut asunder (torn off) from that which is abhorred

The fire (of Hell) is made the torment of the infidels because fire is the (proper) test for stones

How oft, how oft, have we spoken gently to our stony hearts, and they would not accept the counsel!

For a bad wound the vein gets (requires) a bad (severe) remedy the teeth of the dog are suitable for the donkey's head

The wicked women to the wicked men is wisdom the ugly is the mate and fitting (consort) for the ugly

3605 Whatever, then, you wish to mate with, go, become absorbed in the loved (object), and assume its shape and qualities

If you wish for the light, make yourself ready to receive the light, if you wish to be far (from God), become self-conceited and far,

And if you wish (to find) a way out of this ruined prison, do not turn your head away from the Beloved, *but bow in worship and draw nigh*

The remainder of the story of Zayd (and what he said) in answer to the Prophet, on whom be peace

This discourse hath no end "Arise, O Zayd, and tie a shackle on the Buráq (steed) of thy rational spirit

Since the rational spirit exposes faults, it is rending the curtains of concealment

3610 Concealment is desired by God for awhile Drive away this drummer, bar the road!

Do not gallop, draw rein, 'tis better it (thy spirit) should be veiled, 'tis better that every one should be gladdened by his own fancy

God is wishing that even His despairing ones should not avert their faces (refrain) from this worship (of Him)

Even on the ground of a hope they become ennobled for a few days (a short time) they are running at its stirrup (following Divine worship)

He wishes that that mercy should shine upon all, on the evil and the good, because of the universality of His mercy

3615 God is wishing that every prince and captive should be hopeful and fearful and afraid

This hope and fear are in the veil (separating the seen from the unseen), that they may be fostered behind this veil

When thou hast rent the veil, where are fear and hope? Might and majesty and (the power to inflict) probation belong to the unseen"

A young man on the bank of a river thought (to himself), "Our fisherman (here) is Solomon

(But) if this is he, why is he alone and disguised? And if not, why has he the aspect of Solomon?"

3620 Thus thinking, he remained in two minds until Solomon (once more) became king and absolute ruler

The demon departed and fled from his (Solomon's) kingdom and throne the sword of his fortune shed that devil's blood

He put the ring upon his finger, the hosts of demons and peris assembled

The men came to look, amongst them he who had the fancy (that the fisherman was Solomon in disguise)

When he opened his (Solomon's) hand and saw the ring, his pondering and seeking (to decide rightly) vanished all at once

Anxiety occurs (only) at the time when that (object of desire) is hidden this searching is after the unseen

Whilst he was absent, fancy waxed strong in his breast as soon as he was present, his fancy departed

If the radiant sky is not without rain, neither is the dark earth without vegetation.

(God said), "I want (what is signified by the words) *they believe in the unseen* on that account I have shut the window of the fleeting world

If I open its window as on the day of the (last) trump, how should I say, '*Dost thou see any clefts therein?*'"

In order that in this darkness they may make endeavours (to find the way), they are turning, every one, their faces in some direction

For awhile things are reversed the thief brings the magistrate to the gallows,

So that many a sultan and man of lofty spirit becomes the slave of his own slave for awhile

Service (performed) in absence (through faith in the unseen) is fair and comely, when service is demanded (by God from us), 'tis pleasing (to Him) that the absent should be remembered (that we should remember to perform what is due to Him, though He is unseen)

Where (in what position) is one that praises the king in his presence, compared with one that is shamefaced in absence (from him)?

The governor of a fortress who, on the border of the kingdom, far from the sultan and the shadow (protection) of the sultanate,

Guards the fortress from enemies and will not sell it for boundless riches,

Who, though absent from the king on the outskirt of the frontiers, keeps faith (with him) like one who is present—

He in the king's sight is better than the rest who are serving in his presence and ready to devote their lives

Therefore half an atom of regard to one's duty in absence is better than a hundred-thousandfold observance thereof in presence

Obedience (to God) and faith are praiseworthy now, after death, when all is plainly shown, they will be spurned

"Inasmuch as the unseen and the absent and the veil are better, close thy mouth 'tis better for us to be silent

O brother, refrain[1] from speech God himself will make

[1] Literally, 'withhold thy hand'

manifest the knowledge that is with Him (in His possession)

Witness enough for the sun is its face what thing is the greatest witness (of all)? God "

"Nay, speak I will, since both God and the angels and the men of learning are allied in setting forth (this truth)

3645 God and the angels and those learned in the sciences (of divinity) bear witness that there is no Lord except Him who endureth for ever "

Since God hath given testimony, who are the angels, that they should be associated in the testimony?

(They are associated) because unsound (weak) eyes and hearts cannot support the radiance and (clear) testimony of the Sun,

Like a bat, which cannot bear the glow of the sun and abandons hope

Know, then, that the angels, as we also, are helpers (co-witnesses)—displayers of the sun in heaven—

3650 Who say, "We have derived (our) light from a Sun, we have shone upon the weak, like vicegerents (of a mighty King) "

(Whether they be like) the new moon or the moon seven days old or the full moon, every angel has his (particular) rank in respect of light and (spiritual) worth

Every angel, according to their (different) degrees, has (a portion of) that radiance, consisting of three or four (pairs of) luminous wings,

Just as the wings of human intellects, amongst which there is great difference (in quality)

Hence the associate of every human being in good and evil is that angel whose dignity is corresponding to his or hers

3655 The stars shine, for the sake of guidance, upon the dim-sighted man who cannot bear even (the light of) the moon

How the Prophet, on whom be peace, said to Zayd, "Do not tell this mystery more plainly than this, and take care to comply (with the religious law)"

The Prophet said, "My Companions are (like) the stars, a candle to travellers (on the Way), and meteors to be cast at the devils "

If every one had the eye and the strength to receive light from the sun of heaven,

No moon and stars would be needed to serve as witnesses to (the existence of) a sun

The Moon (the Prophet) is saying to earth and cloud and shadow, "I am a man, I am *one like you*, (*but*) *it is revealed to me* (*that your God is one God*)

Like you, I was dark in my nature the Sun's revelation gave me such a light as this

I have a certain darkness in comparison with the (spiritual) suns, (but) I have light for the darknesses of (human) souls

I am faint (less bright than the Sun) in order that thou mayst be able to bear (my beams), for thou art not the man for (a man who can bear) the most radiant Sun

I was woven (mingled) together, like honey and vinegar, that I might find the way to (cure) sickness of heart[1]

Since thou hast recovered from thine illness, O thou (that wert) in thrall (to it), leave the vinegar and continue to eat the honey "

(If) the throne of the heart has become restored to soundness and purged of sensuality, thereon *the Merciful God is seated on His Throne*

After this, God controls the heart without intermediary, since the heart has attained to this relation (with Him)

This discourse hath no end Where is Zayd, that I may counsel him not to seek notoriety?

The (author's) return to the story of Zayd

You will not find Zayd now, for he has fled he has darted away from the shoe-row and dropped his shoes

Who are you (that you should hope to find him)? Zayd cannot even find himself, (he has vanished) like the star on which the sun shone

You will find neither mark nor trace of him, you will not find a straw (star) in the straw-strewn Way (the Milky Way)

Our senses and finite speech (reason) are obliterated in the knowledge and wisdom of our (Divine) King

Their (the God-intoxicated mystics') senses and understandings within (them) are (tossed), wave on wave, in (the sea of) *they are assembled before Us*

When night comes, 'tis again the time of (bearing) the burden the stars, which had become hidden, go (again) to work

God gives back to the senseless ones their (lost) senses (they return to consciousness) troop after troop, with rings (of mystic knowledge) in their ears,

Dancing, waving their hands in praise (of God), triumphing (and crying), "O Lord, Thou hast brought us to life "

Those crumbled skins and bones have become (like) horsemen and have raised the dust

At Resurrection both the thankful and the ungrateful rush along from non-existence towards existence

Why do you turn away your head and pretend not to see?

[1] Literally, "liver "

Did you not turn away your head at first, (when you were) in non-existence (and disbelieved that you would ever come into existence)?

You had planted your foot (firmly) in non-existence, saying, "Who will uproot me from my place?"

3680 Are not you beholding the action of your Lord[1], who dragged you (into existence) by the forelock,

Until He drew you into (all) these various states (of being), which were not in your thought or fancy?

That non-existence is always His slave work (in His service), O demon! Solomon is living

The demon is making *large bowls like watering-troughs* he dare not say a word in refusal or in retort

Look at yourself, how you are trembling with fear (of non-existence) know that non-existence also is constantly trembling (lest God should bring it into existence)

3685 And if you are grasping at (worldly) dignities, 'tis from fear too that you are suffering agony of spirit

Except love of the most beauteous God everything, though (outwardly) it is (pleasant like) eating sugar, is (in truth) agony of spirit

What is agony of spirit? To advance towards death and not grasp the Water of Life

People fix both their eyes on earth and death they have a hundred doubts concerning the Water of Life

Strive that the hundred doubts may become ninety (may decrease) go (towards God) in the night (of this world), for if you slumber, the night will go (from you)

3690 In the dark night seek that (shining) Day put in front (follow) the darkness-consuming Reason

In the evil-coloured night there is much good the Water of Life is the mate of darkness

How is it possible to lift up the head from slumber, whilst you are sowing a hundred such seeds of slothfulness?

Dead (heavy) slumber and dead (unlawful) food became friends[2] the merchant fell asleep and the night-thief got to work

Do you not know who your enemies are? Those made of fire[3] are enemies to the existence of those made of earth[4]

3695 Fire is the enemy of water and its children, even as water is an enemy to the life of fire

Water kills fire because it is the enemy and foe of the children of water

[1] Literally ' the Divine action in regard to you

[2] I e spiritual lethargy is closely allied with sin

[3] The devils

[4] Mankind

To proceed[1], this fire is the fire of lust, wherein is the root of sin and error

The external fire may be quenched by some water, (but) the fire of lust is bringing (you) to Hell

The fire of lust is not allayed by water, because it has the (insatiable) nature of Hell in respect of (inflicting) torment

What is the remedy for the fire of lust? The light of the Religion your (the Moslems') light is the (means of) extinguishing the fire of the infidels

What kills this fire? The Light of God Make the light of Abraham your teacher,

That this body of yours, which resembles wood (faggots), may be delivered from the fire of the Nimrod-like flesh (*nafs*)

Fiery lust is not diminished by indulging it it is diminished, without any escape (inevitably), by leaving it (ungratified)

So long as thou art laying faggots on a fire, how will the fire be extinguished by a carrier of faggots[2]?

When thou withholdest the faggots, the fire dies out, because fear of God carries (as it were) water to the fire

How should the fire blacken the beauteous face (of a soul) which lays (on itself) rose-colour (derived) from the fear of God that is in (men's) hearts?

How a conflagration occurred in the city (Medina) in the days of 'Umar, may God be well-pleased with him

A conflagration occurred in the time of 'Umar it was devouring stones as though they were dry wood

It fell upon buildings and houses, until (at last) it darted at the wings and nests of birds

Half the city caught fire from the flames water was afraid of it (the fire) and amazed

Some intelligent persons were throwing skins of water and vinegar on the fire,

(But) out of spite (obstinacy) the fire was increasing aid was coming to it from One who is infinite[3]

The people came in haste to 'Umar, saying, "Our fire will not be quenched at all by water"

He said, "That fire is one of God's signs 'tis a flame from the fire of your wickedness

Discard water and deal out bread (in charity), discard avarice if ye are my people (followers)"

The folk said to him, "We have opened our doors, we have been bountiful and devoted to generosity"

[1] Literally, "after that"

[2] Or, with incorrect rhyme, "by carrying faggots"

[3] Or, with incorrect rhyme, "from (the realm of) infinity"

He replied, "Ye have given bread by rule and habit, ye have not opened your hands for the sake of God—

(Only) for glory and for ostentation and for pride, not because of fear and piety and supplication"

Wealth is seed, and do not lay it in every salty ground do not put a sword in the hand of every highwayman

Distinguish the friends of the Religion (*ahl-i Dín*) from the enemies of God (*ahl-i kín*) seek the man that sits with God, and sit with him

Every one shows favour to his own folk the fool (who shows favour to the foolish) thinks he has really done (good and religious) work

How an enemy spat in the face of the Prince of the Faithful, 'Alí, may God honour his person, and how 'Alí dropped the sword from his hand

Learn how to act sincerely[1] from 'Alí know that the Lion of God ('Alí) was purged of (all) deceit

In fighting against the infidels he got the upper hand of (vanquished) a certain knight, and quickly drew a sword and made haste (to slay him)

He spat on the face of 'Alí, the pride of every prophet and every saint,

He spat on the countenance before which the face of the moon bows low in the place of worship

'Alí at once threw his sword away and relaxed (his efforts) in fighting him

That champion was astounded by this act and by his showing forgiveness and mercy without occasion

He said, "You lifted your keen sword against me why have you flung it aside and spared me?

What did you see that was better than combat with me, so that you have become slack in hunting me down?

What did you see, so that such anger as yours abated, and so that such a lightning flashed and (then) recoiled?

What did you see, that from seeing (only) the reflexion thereof a flame appeared in my heart and soul?

What did you see, beyond (material) existence and space, that was better than life?—and (so) you gave me life

In bravery you are the Lion of the Lord in generosity who indeed knows who (what) you are?

In generosity you are (like) Moses' cloud in the desert, whence came the dishes of food and bread incomparable"

The clouds give wheat which man with toil makes cooked (easy to digest) and sweet as honey

(But) Moses' cloud spread the wings of mercy and gave

[1] *I e* to act for God's sake alone, without any regard to self-interest

cooked and sweet food that was (ready to be eaten) without trouble

For the sake of those (beggars) who partook of its bounty, its (the cloud's) mercy raised a banner (displayed itself) in the world

During forty years that ration and largesse did not fail the hopeful people (of Israel) for a single day,

Until they too, because of their vileness, arose and demanded leeks and green herbs and lettuce

O people of Ahmad (Mohammed), who are of the noble, (for you) that food is continuing till the Resurrection

When (the Prophet's saying), "I pass the night with my Lord," was uttered, (the words) "He gives (me) food" and "He gives (me) drink" referred metaphorically to (spiritual) food (and drink)

Accept this (saying) without any (perverse) interpretation, that it may come into your throat (as agreeably) as honey and milk

Because interpretation (alteration of the meaning) is a rejection of the gift, since he (the interpreter) regards that real (original) meaning as faulty

The view that it is faulty arises from the weakness of his understanding Universal Reason is the kernel, and our reason is like the rind

Alter yourself, not the Traditions (of the Prophet) abuse your (dull) brain, not the rose-garden (the true sense which you cannot apprehend)

"O 'Alí, thou who art all mind and eye, relate a little of that which thou hast seen!

The sword of thy forbearance hath rent my soul, the water of thy knowledge hath purified my earth

Tell it forth! I know that these are His (God's) mysteries, because 'tis His work (way) to kill without sword

He that works without tools and without limbs, He that bestows these profitable gifts,

Causes the intelligence to taste myriads of wines in such wise that eyes and ears are unaware

Tell it forth, O falcon of the empyrean that findest goodly prey, that (I may know) what thou hast seen at this time from the Maker

Thine eye has learned to perceive the Unseen, (while) the eyes of bystanders are sealed"

One man is beholding a moon plainly, while another sees the world dark,

And another beholds three moons together These three persons (beholders) are seated in one place, yea (verily)

The eyes of all three are open, and the ears of all three are sharp (attentive), (they are) fastened on thee and in flight from me

3755 Is this an enchantment of the eye? (Or) is it a marvellous hidden grace? On thee is the form of the wolf, and on me is the quality (beauty) of Joseph

If the worlds are eighteen thousand and more, these eighteen (thousand) are not subject (accessible) to every eye

"Reveal the mystery, O 'Alí, thou who art approved (by God), O thou who art good fate after evil fate

Either do thou declare that which thy reason hath found, or I will tell that which hath shone forth on me

From thee it shone forth on me how shouldst thou hide it? Without tongue thou art darting rays of light, like the moon

3760 But if the moon's orb come to speech, it more quickly leads the night-travellers into the (right) way

They become safe from error and heedlessness the voice of the moon prevails over the voice of the ghoul

Inasmuch as the moon (even) without speech is showing the way, when it speaks it becomes light upon light

Since thou art the gate of the city of Knowledge, since thou art the beams of the sun of Clemency,

Be open, O Gate, to him that seeks the gate, so that by means of thee the husks may reach the core

3765 Be open unto everlasting, O Gate of Mercy, O Entrance-hall to *None is like unto Him*"

Every air and mote is indeed a place for vision (of God), (but so long as it is) unopened, who says "Yonder is a door"?

Unless the Watcher open a door, this idea never stirs within

When a door is opened, he (on whom this idea has dawned) becomes amazed, grows wings, and begins to fly on (the wings of) the idea

A careless man suddenly found the treasure in the ruin after that, he was hastening to (search in) every ruin

3770 Till you gain the pearl from one dervish, how should you seek the pearl from another dervish?

Though opinion run with its own feet for (many) years, it will not pass beyond the cleft of its own nostrils

Say, are you seeing aught except your nose? Say, how will you see if you turn up your nose (in self-conceit)?

How that infidel asked 'Alí, may God honour his person, saying, "Since thou wert victorious over such a man as I am, how didst thou drop the sword from thy hand?"

He said, "Speak, O Prince of the Faithful, that my soul may stir within my body, like the embryo"

How hath the embryo the means (of stirring) during the period when it is ruled (by the stars)? It comes (turns) from the stars towards the sun

When the time comes for the embryo to receive the (vital) spirit, at that time the sun becomes its helper

This embryo is brought into movement by the sun, for the sun is quickly endowing it with spirit

From the other stars this embryo received only an impression, until the sun shone upon it

By which way did it become connected in the womb with the beauteous sun?

By the hidden way that is remote from our sense-perception The sun in heaven hath many ways

The way whereby gold receives nourishment, and the way whereby the (common) stone is made a jacinth,

And the way whereby it makes the ruby red, and the way whereby it gives the lightning-flash to the (iron) horse-shoe,

And the way whereby it ripens the fruit, and the way whereby it gives heart to one distraught (with fear)

"Say it forth, O falcon with shining wings who hast learned (to be familiar) with the King and with his fore-arm

Say it forth, O royal falcon that dost catch the 'Anqá, O thou that dost vanquish an army by thyself, not with (the aid of) an army

Thou alone art the (whole) community, thou art one and a hundred thousand Say it forth, O thou to whose falcon thy slave has fallen a prey

Wherefore this mercy in the place of vengeance? Whose way is it to give the hand to a dragon?"

How the Prince of the Faithful made answer (and explained) what was the reason of his dropping the sword from his hand on that occasion

He said, "I am wielding the sword for God's sake, I am the servant of God, I am not under the command of the body

I am the Lion of God, I am not the lion of passion my deed bears witness to my religion

In war I am (manifesting the truth of) *thou didst not throw when thou threwest* I am (but) as the sword, and the wielder is the (Divine) Sun

I have removed the baggage of self out of the way, I have deemed (what is) other than God to be non-existence

I am a shadow, the Sun is my lord, I am the chamberlain, I am not the curtain (which prevents approach) to Him

I am filled with the pearls of union, like a (jewelled) sword in battle I make (men) living, not slain

Blood does not cover the sheen of my sword how should the wind sweep away my clouds?

I am not a straw, I am a mountain of forbearance and patience and justice how should the fierce wind carry off the mountain?"

3795 That which is removed from its place by a wind is rubbish, for indeed the contrary winds are many

The wind of anger and the wind of lust and the wind of greed swept away him that performed not the (ritual) prayers

"I am a mountain, and my being is His building, and if I become like a straw, my wind (the wind that moves me) is His wind

My longing is not stirred save by His wind, my captain is naught but love of the One

Anger is king over kings, and to me it is a slave even anger I have bound under the bridle

3800 The sword of my forbearance hath smitten the neck of my anger, the anger of God hath come on me like mercy

I am plunged in light although my roof is ruined, I have become a garden although I am (styled) Bu Turab (the father of dust)

Since (the thought of something) other than God has intervened, it behoves (me) to sheathe my sword,

That my name may be *he loves for God's sake*, that my desire may be *he hates for God's sake*,

That my generosity may be *he gives for God's sake*, that my being may be *he withholds for God's sake*

3805 My stinginess is for God's sake, my bounty is for God's sake alone I belong entirely to God, I do not belong to any one (else),

And that which I am doing for God's sake is not (done in) conformity, it is not fancy and opinion, it is naught but intuition

I have been freed from effort and search, I have tied my sleeve to the skirt of God

If I am flying, I behold the place to which I soar, and if I am circling, I behold the axis on which I revolve,

And if I am dragging a burden, I know whither I am the moon, and the Sun is in front of me as the guide"

3810 There is no means (possibility) of communicating more than this to the people in the river there is no room for the Sea

I speak low according to the measure of (their) understandings 'tis no fault, this is the practice of the Prophet

"I am free from self-interest hear the testimony of a freeman, for the testimony of slaves is not worth two barleycorns"

In the religious law the testimony of a slave has no value at (the time of) litigation and judgement

(Even) if thousands of slaves bear witness on thy behalf, the law does not accept their testimony as worth a straw

3815 In God's sight the slave of lust is worse than menials and slaves brought into servitude,

For the latter becomes free at a single word from his master, while the former lives sweet but dies sour and bitter

The slave of lust hath no (means of) release at all except through the grace of God and His special favour.

He has fallen into a pit that has no bottom, and that is his (own) sin: it is not (Divine) compulsion and injustice.

He has cast himself into such a pit that I find no rope capable of (reaching) its bottom.

I will make an end. If this discourse go further, not only hearts but rocks will bleed.[1]

(If) these hearts[2] have not bled, 'tis not because of (their) hardness, 'tis (because of) perplexity and preoccupation and ill-fatedness.

They will bleed one day when blood is no use to them: do thou bleed at a time when (thy) blood is not rejected.

Inasmuch as the testimony of slaves is not accepted, the approved witness is he that is not the slave of the ghoul (of sensuality).

(The words) *We have sent thee as a witness* came in the Warning (the Qur'án), because he (the Prophet) was entirely free[3] from (creaturely) existence.

"Since I am free, how should anger bind me? Nothing is here but Divine qualities. Come in!

Come in, for the grace of God hath made thee free, because His mercy had the precedence over His wrath.

Come in now, for thou hast escaped from the peril: thou wert a (common) stone, the Elixir hath made thee a jewel.

Thou hast been delivered from unbelief and its thorn-thicket: blossom like a rose in the cypress-garden of *Hu* (God).

Thou art I and I am thou, O illustrious one: thou wert 'Alí—how should I kill 'Alí?

Thou hast committed a sin better than any act of piety, thou hast traversed Heaven in a single moment."

Very fortunate (was) the sin which the man committed: do not rose-leaves spring from a thorn?

Was not the sin of 'Umar and his attempt on (the life of) the Prophet leading him to the gate of acceptance?

Was not Pharaoh because of the magic of the magicians drawing them (to himself), and did not (spiritual) fortune come to their aid?

Had it not been for their magic and denial (of Moses), who would have brought them to rebellious Pharaoh?

How would they have seen the rod and the miracles? Disobedience (to God) became obedience, O disobedient people.[4]

[1] Literally, "what of the liver? for the hard rock will become blood."
[2] Literally, "livers."
[3] Literally, "free the son of the free."
[4] *I.e.* the sin of the magicians ultimately led them to faith in God.

God hath smitten the neck of despair, inasmuch as sin and disobedience have become obedience

Since He changes evil acts (into good), He makes it (the disobedience) an act of obedience in despite of slanderers (devils)

By this (mercy of God) the stoned (accursed) Devil is driven away and bursts with envy and is cloven asunder

He strives to foster a sin (in us) and by means of that sin bring us into a pit,

3840 When he sees that the sin has become an act of obedience (to God), there comes round for him an unblest hour

"Come in! I open the door to thee Thou spattest (on me) and I give thee a present

Such things I am giving to the doer of iniquity (thou seest) in what fashion I lay my head before the left foot[1]

What then do I bestow on the doer of righteousness? Know thou, (I bestow) treasures and kingdoms everlasting

How the Prophet, on whom be peace, said in the ear of the stirrup-holder of the Prince of the Faithful ('Alí), may God honour his person, "I tell thee, 'Alí will be slain by thy hand"

I am such a man that the honey of my kindness did not become poison in wrath (even) against my murderer

3845 The Prophet said in the ear of my servant that one day he would sever this head of mine from my neck

The Prophet by (Divine) inspiration informed my friend that in the end my destruction would be (wrought) by his hand

He (my friend) says, 'Kill me first, in order that this hateful crime may not proceed from me'

I say, 'Since my death is (to come) from thee, how can I seek to evade the destiny (of God)?'

He falls before me, saying, 'O generous man, for God's sake cleave me in twain,

3850 That this evil end may not come upon me, and that my soul may not burn (with grief) for (thee who art) its (very) life'

I say, 'Go the Pen (of Divine ordainment) is dry[2], by that Pen many a (lofty) landmark[3] is overthrown

There is no hatred of thee in my soul, because I do not regard this (act) as (proceeding) from thee

Thou art God's instrument, God's hand is the (real) agent how should I assail and oppose God's instrument?'"

He (the knight) said, "For what reason, then, is retaliation (sanctioned)?" "'Tis from God, too," said 'Alí, "and that is a hidden mystery

[1] I e "I expose myself to contumely from the wicked"
[2] I e the Divine decree is written and unalterably fixed
[3] Or, 'many a man of mark'

If He takes offence at His own act, (yet) He causes gardens 3855
(of good) to grow from that taking offence

It beseems Him to take offence at His own act, inasmuch as in vengeance and mercy He is One

In this city of phenomena He is the Prince, in (all) the realms (of the world) He is the Ruler

If He breaks His own instrument, He mends that which has become broken "

Recognise, O noble sir, the indication of (the text), (*Whatever*) *verse We shall cancel or cause to be forgotten*, followed by *We shall bring a better*

Every (religious) law that He (God) has cancelled—He has 3860
taken away grass and brought roses in exchange

Night cancels the business of day behold an inanimateness (inertia) that enlightens the intellect[1]

Again, night is cancelled by the light of day, so that the inanimateness is consumed by that fire-kindling one

Although that sleep and rest are darkness, is not the Water of Life within the darkness?

Did not minds become refreshed in that darkness? Did not a pause (in recitation) become the source of (increased beauty in) the voice?

For contraries are manifested by means of contraries in the 3865
black core (of the heart) He (God) created the everlasting light (of love)

The wars of the Prophet became the pivot (determining cause) of peace the peace of this latter age was (produced) from those wars

That heart-ravisher cut off hundreds of thousands of heads, in order that the heads of the (whole) world's people might win security

The gardener lops the harmful bough, in order that the date-palm may gain (tallness of) stature and goodness

The expert (gardener) digs up the weeds from the garden, in order that his garden and fruit may look flourishing

The physician extracts bad teeth, in order that the beloved 3870
(patient) may be saved from pain and sickness

Many advantages are (concealed) within defects for martyrs there is life in death

When the (martyr's) throat has been cut that swallowed the daily bread, (the spiritual blessings implied in the text) *receiving the (Divine) bounty, rejoicing*, shall be delicious (to him)

When the throat of an animal is cut duly (in the manner prescribed by law), there grows (from it) the throat of man[1], and its excellence is increased (thereby)

[1] Because the slaughtered animal is eaten and assimilated by man

When a (martyred) man's throat is cut, come, consider what the result will be! Judge of this (case) by the analogy of that (case).

3875 A third throat will be born, and care of it will be (taken by) the sherbet of God and His lights.

The throat that has been cut drinks (the Divine) sherbet, but (only) the throat that has been delivered from Nay and has died in Yea.

Make an end, O pusillanimous short-fingered (infirm) one! How long will the life of thy spirit be (sustained) by bread?

Like the willow, thou hast no fruit, because thou hast lost thine honour for the sake of white bread.

If the sensual soul cannot refrain from this bread, take the elixir and turn thy copper into gold.

3880 Wouldst thou wash thy garment (clean), O so-and-so, do not avert thy face from the bleachers' quarter.

Although the bread has broken thy fast, cling to Him that binds what is broken, and ascend!

Inasmuch as His hand binds what is broken, it follows that His breaking is assuredly mending.

If thou break it, He will say to thee, "Come, make it whole (again)", and thou hast neither hand nor foot (thou art helpless).

Therefore He (alone) has the right to break, for He (alone) can mend what has been broken.

3885 He that knows how to sew (together) knows how to tear (asunder); whatsoever He sells, He buys (something) better (in exchange).

He lays the house in ruins, upside down; then in one moment He makes it more habitable (than it was before).

If He sever one head from the body, He at once raises up hundreds of thousands of heads (for the beheaded person).

If He had not ordained a retaliation upon the guilty, or if He had not said, "*In retaliation there is (for you) a life,*"

Who would have the stomach (would dare) of himself (on his own responsibility) to wield (draw) a sword against him that is a thrall to the decree of God?—

3890 Because every one whose eyes He (God) hath opened would know that the slayer was constrained (to slay) by (Divine) predestination.

Any one on whom that predestination became a collar (any one subjected to it) would strike a sword-blow even at the head of his (own) child.

Go, fear (God) and do not rail at the wicked: know thine own impotence before the snare of the (Divine) decree.

How Adam, on whom be peace, marvelled at the perdition of Iblís and showed vanity

One day Adam looked with contempt and scorn on Iblís who is damned

He behaved with self-conceit and became self-approving he laughed at the plight of accursed Iblís

The jealousy of God cried out (against him)—"O chosen one, 3895
thou art ignorant of the hidden mysteries (of His providence)

If He should turn the fur inside out[1], He would tear up from root and bottom (even) the (firmest) mountain (of faith),

At that instant He would rend the veil of (put to shame) a hundred Adams and bring (to light) a hundred Devils newly converted to Islam "

Adam said, "I repent of this look, I will not think so disrespectfully again "

O Help of them that call for help, lead us (aright)! There is no (cause for) pride in knowledge or riches

Do not let a heart stray that Thou hast guided by Thy grace, 3900
and avert the evil which the Pen has written

Let the evil of Thy ordainment pass from our souls do not cut us off from those who are well-pleased[2] (with Thee)

There is naught more bitter than separation from Thee without Thy protection there is naught but perplexity

Our (worldly) goods waylay (and plunder) our (spiritual) goods our bodies tear the garment (of spirituality) from our souls

Inasmuch as (the evil wrought by) our hand devours (the good towards which we move) our foot, how shall any one save his soul without Thy security?

And (even) if (unaided) he save his soul from these awful 3905
dangers, he will (only) have saved a stock of misfortune and fear,

Because the soul, when it is not united with the Beloved, is blind and blue (miserable) with itself for ever

When Thou wilt not give him admission (to Thy presence) —even suppose he has saved his soul, regard as dead the soul that would live without Thee

If Thou art upbraiding Thy slaves, that is suitable to Thee, O Thou whose every wish is fulfilled

And if Thou say that the sun and moon are scum, and if Thou say that the (straight) stature of the cypress is (bent) double,

And if Thou call the empyrean and the sky contemptible, and 3910
if Thou say that the mine and the sea are poor—

[1] *I e* "if God were to manifest His wrath instead of His mercy or His mercy instead of His wrath "

[2] Literally, "the brethren of acquiescence "

That is proper in reference to Thy perfection Thine is the power of perfecting (all) mortalities,

For Thou art holy (and free) from danger and from non-existence Thou art He that brings the non-existent ones into being and endows (them with existence)

He that made to grow can burn (destroy), because when He has torn, He can sew (mend)

Every autumn He burns (withers) the garden, (then) He makes to grow again the rose that dyes (the garden)[1],

3915 Saying, "O thou who wert withered, come forth, be fresh, once more be fair and of fair renown!"

The eye of the narcissus became blind He restored it, the throat of the reed was cut He himself fostered it[2] again (and revived it)

Since we are made (by God) and are not makers, we are not (entitled to be anything) but humble and content

We all are of the flesh and busy with fleshliness if Thou call us not (to Thyself), we all are Ahrimans (Devils)

(If) we have been delivered from Ahriman, (it is only) because Thou hast redeemed our souls from blindness

3920 Thou art the Guide of every one that hath life who (of what account) is the blind man without staff and guide?

Excepting Thee (alone), whatsoever is sweet or unsweet is man-destroying[3] and the essence of fire

Any one to whom fire is a refuge and support becomes both a Magian and a Zoroaster

Everything except Allah is vain verily the grace of Allah is a cloud pouring abundantly and continually

Returning to the story of the Prince of the Faithful, 'Alí—may God honour his person!—and how generously he behaved to his murderer

Go back to 'Ali and his murderer, and the kindness he showed to the murderer, and his superiority (moral and spiritual excellence)

3925 He said, "Day and night I see the murderer with my eyes, (but) I have no anger against him,

Because death has become sweet as manna to me my death has laid fast hold of resurrection[4]"

The death of deathlessness is lawful to us, the provision of unprovidedness is a bounty to us

'Tis death outwardly but life inwardly apparently 'tis a

[1] *I e* "fills the garden with colour"

[2] Or, "played on it (and breathed life into it)," *i e* He cut the reed and made it a flute

[3] Literally, "man-burning"

[4] *I e* "my death holds and possesses (as its real nature) resurrection"

cutting-off (decease)[1], in secret (in reality) 'tis permanence (life without end)

To the embryo in the womb birth is a going (to another state of existence) in the world it (the embryo) blossoms anew[2]

"Since I have intense love and longing for death, the prohi- 3930
bition *do not cast yourselves* (*into destruction*) is (meant) for me,

Because (only) the sweet berry is prohibited, (for) how should it become necessary to prohibit the sour one?

The berry that has a sour kernel and rind—its very sourness and disagreeableness are (serve as) a prohibition of it

To me the berry of dying has become sweet (the text) *nay, they are living* has come (from God) on my account

Slay me, my trusty friends, slay me, vile as I am verily, in my being slain is my life for evermore

Verily, in my death is my life, O youth—how long shall I 3935
be parted from my home? Until when?

If there were not in my staying (in this world) my separation (from God), He would not have said, '*Verily, we are returning to Him*'"

The returning one is he that comes back to his (native) city, and (fleeing) from the revolution of Time approaches the Unity

How the stirrup-holder of 'Alí, may God honour his person, came (to him), saying, "For God's sake, kill me and deliver me from this doom"

"He came back, saying, 'O 'Alí, kill me quickly, that I may not see that bitter moment and hour

Shed my blood, I make it lawful to thee, so that my eye may not behold that resurrection'[3]

I said, 'If every atom should become a murderer and, dagger 3940
in hand, go to attack thee,

None (of them) could cut from thee the tip of a single hair, since the Pen has written against thee such a line (of doom)

But do not grieve I am intercessor for thee I am the spirit's master, I am not the body's slave

This body hath no value in my sight without my body I am the noble (in spirit), the son of the noble

Dagger and sword have become my sweet basil my death has become my banquet and narcissus-plot'"

He that hamstrings (mortifies) his body in this fashion, how 3945
should he covet the Princedom and the Caliphate?

[1] Literally, 'its outward (aspect) is cut short"

[2] And, by the same analogy, death opens a new world to the spirit

[3] *I e* "do not let me be raised from the dead with this crime to answer for"

Outwardly he strives after power and authority, (but only) that he may show to princes the (right) way and judgement,

That he may give another spirit to the Princedom, that he may give fruit to the palm-tree of the Caliphate

Explaining that the motive of the Prophet, on whom be peace, in seeking to conquer Mecca and other (places) than Mecca was not love of worldly dominion, inasmuch as he has said "This world is a carcase," but that on the contrary it was by the command (of God)

Likewise the Prophet's struggle to conquer Mecca—how can he be suspected of (being inspired by) love of this world?

He who on the day of trial shut his eyes and heart to the treasury of the Seven Heavens,

3950 (When) the horizons of all the Seven Heavens were full of houris and genies (who had come) to gaze upon him,

Having arrayed themselves for his sake—how indeed should he care for anything except the Beloved?

He had become so filled with magnification of God, that even those nearest to God would find no way (of intruding) there

"In Us (in Our unity) is no room for a prophet sent as an apostle, nor yet for the Angels or the Spirit Do ye, therefore, understand!"

He (also) said, "We are *má zágh* (that is, *Our eye did not rove*), we are not (looking for carrion) like crows (*zagh*), We are intoxicated with (enraptured by) the Dyer, we are not intoxicated with the garden (of flowers with their many dyes)"

3955 Inasmuch as to the eye of the Prophet the treasuries of the celestial spheres and intelligences seemed (worthless) as a straw,

What, then, would Mecca and Syria and 'Iráq be (worth to him), that he should show fight and longing (to gain possession of them)?

That thought and opinion (of his motive) is the hypocrite's, who judges (the Prophet) from the analogy of his own wicked soul

When you make yellow glass a veil (between your eyes and the sun), you see all the sunlight yellow

Break those blue and yellow glasses, in order that you may know (distinguish) the dust and the man (who is concealed by it)

3960 The dust (of the body) has lifted up its head (risen) around the (spiritual) horseman you have fancied the dust to be the man of God

Iblís saw (only) the dust, and said, "How should this offspring of clay (Adam) be superior to me of the fiery brow?"

So long as thou art regarding the holy (prophets and saints) as men, know that that view is an inheritance from Iblís

If thou art not the child of Iblís, O contumacious one, then how has the inheritance of that cur come to thee?

"I am not a cur, I am the Lion of God, a worshipper of God the lion of God is he that has escaped from (phenomenal) form

The lion of this world seeks a prey and provision, the lion of the Lord seeks freedom and death

Inasmuch as in death he sees a hundred existences, like the moth he burns away (his own) existence"

Desire for death became the badge[1] of the sincere, for this word (declaration) was (made) a test for the Jews

He (God) said in the Qur'án, "O people of the Jews, death is treasure and gain to the sincere

Even as there is desire for profit (in the hearts of the worldly), the desire to win death is better than that (in the eyes of the sincere)

O Jews, for the sake of (being held in) honour by men of worth, let this wish be uttered on your tongues"

Not a single Jew had so much courage (as to respond), when Mohammed raised this banner (gave this challenge)

He said, "If they should utter this on their tongues, truly not one Jew would be left in the world"

Then the Jews brought the property (tribute in kind) and land-tax, saying, "Do not put us to shame, O Lamp (of the world)"

"There is no end in sight to this discourse give me thy hand[2], since thine eye hath seen the Friend"

How the Prince of the Faithful, 'Alí—may God honour his person!—said to his antagonist, "When thou didst spit in my face, my fleshly self was aroused and I could no longer act with entire sincerity (towards God)[3] that hindered me from slaying thee"

The Prince of the Faithful said to that youth, "In the hour of battle, O knight,

When thou didst spit in my face, my fleshly self was aroused and my (good) disposition was corrupted

Half (of my fighting) came to be for God's sake, and half (for) idle passion in God's affair partnership[4] is not allowable

Thou art limned by the hand of the Lord thou art God's (work), thou art not made by me

[1] Literally, "collar"
[2] These words are addressed by Alí to the infidel knight
[3] Literally, 'acting sincerely (towards God) was no more"
[4] *I e* to associate the worship and service of God with any other object

Break God's image, (but only) by God's command, cast (a stone) at the Beloved's glass, (but only) the Beloved's stone "

3980 The fire-worshipper heard this, and a light appeared in his heart, so that he cut a girdle[1]

He said, "I was sowing the seed of wrong I fancied thee (to be) otherwise (than thou art)

Thou hast (really) been the balance (endued) with the (just) nature of the One (God), nay, thou hast been the tongue of every balance

Thou hast been my race and stock and kin, thou hast been the radiance of the candle of my religion

I am the (devoted) slave of that eye-seeking Lamp from which thy lamp received splendour

3985 I am the slave of the billow of that Sea of Light which brings a pearl like this into view

Offer me the profession of the (Moslem) Faith, for I regard thee as the exalted one of the time "

Near fifty persons of his kindred and tribe lovingly turned their faces towards the Religion (of Islam)

By the sword of clemency he ('Ali) redeemed so many throats of such a multitude from the sword

The sword of clemency is sharper than the sword of iron, nay, it is more productive of victory than a hundred armies

3990 Oh, alas, two mouthfuls were eaten, and thereby the ferment of thought was frozen up

A grain of wheat eclipsed the sun of Adam, as the descending node is (the cause of) eclipse to the brilliance of the full-moon.

Behold the beauty of the heart, how its moon scatters the Pleiades (how its light is broken and disordered) by a single handful of clay

When the bread was spirit, it was beneficial, since it became form, it rouses disbelief

As (for example) the green thistles which a camel eats, and gains from eating them a hundred benefits and pleasures

3995 When the camel from the desert eats those same thistles, after their greenness is gone and they have become dry,

They rend his palate and cheek—oh, alas that such a nourishing rose became a sword!

When the bread was spirit, it was (like) the green thistles, since it became form, it is now dry and gross

According as thou hadst formerly been in the habit of eating it, O gracious being,

In the same hope thou (still) art eating this dry stuff, after the spirit has become mingled with clay

[1] I e the sacred thread (*kushtī*) which Zoroastrians wear on their waists

It has become mixed with earth and dry and flesh-cutting abstain now from that herbage, O camel!

The words are coming (forth) very earth-soiled, the water has become turbid stop up the mouth of the well,

That God may again make it pure and sweet, that He who made it turbid may likewise make it pure

Patience brings the object of desire, not haste Have patience—and God knoweth best what is right

BOOK II

IN THE NAME OF GOD THE MERCIFUL THE COMPASSIONATE

Touching this Second Book (of the *Mathnawí*), part of the reason of its postponement is (here) set forth, namely, that if all the Divine Wisdom (shown in any particular act) be made known to His slave, the slave (absorbed) in (contemplation of) the benefits of that act will be left without the power to perform it, and the infinite Wisdom of God will destroy his understanding, (so that) he will not engage in that act Therefore the High God makes a small portion of that infinite Wisdom (to be as) a toggle in his nose and leads him towards that act, for if He give him no information about those benefits, he will not move at all, inasmuch as the motive (of human actions) arises from advantages to ourselves or others[1], for the sake of which we act accordingly, while (on the other hand), if He should pour down upon him the (whole) wisdom of that (act), he will also be unable to move, just as a camel will not go (forward) unless there be a toggle in his nose, and if the toggle be (too) big he will likewise lie down (and refuse to go on) *And there is nothing but We have the storehouses thereof, and We do not send it down but in a certain measure* Without water, earth does not become a brick, nor (again) does it become a brick when there is (too) much water *And the heaven, He raised it and set up the scales* He giveth every thing by the scale, not without calculation and balance, save (only) to those who have been transmuted from the creaturely state of existence and have become (like those described in the text) *And He bestoweth on whom He pleaseth without calculation*, albeit whoso hath not tasted (experienced) doth not know

Some one asked, "What is love?" I answered, "Thou wilt know when thou becomest (lost in) me "

Love is uncalculated affection For that reason it has been said to be in reality the attribute of God and unreal in relation to (man who is) His slave *He (God) loveth them (yuhibbuhum)* is the entire sum Which (of them) is (really the subject of the word *yuhibbunahu*) *they love Him*?

[1] Literally, ' to human beings '

IN THE NAME OF GOD THE MERCIFUL THE COMPASSIONATE

This *Mathnawí* has been delayed for a while an interval was needed in order that the blood might turn to milk

Blood does not become sweet milk until thy fortune gives birth to a new babe Hearken well (to my words)

When the Light of God, Husámu'ddín, drew the reins (of his spirit) back from the zenith of Heaven—

(For) after he had gone in the ascension to (spiritual) realities, without his (life-giving) springtide the buds (of mystic knowledge) were unburst (in my heart)—

5 When (I say) he returned from the Sea towards the shore, the lyre of the poesy of the *Mathnawí* became attuned (again)

The *Mathnawí*, which was the burnisher (purifier) of spirits—his return was the day of (my) seeking (an auspicious) commencement (for it)

The date of beginning[1] this gainful (spiritual) traffic[2] was in the year six hundred and sixty-two

A nightingale went hence and returned it became a falcon for hunting these spiritual truths

May this falcon's resting-place be the fore-arm of the King! May this gate (to the Truth) be open to (all) the people unto everlasting!

10 The bane of this gate is sensuality and lust, else, draught on draught (of spiritual knowledge) is (to be found) here

Gullet and mouth are the eye-bandage (which makes you blind) to yonder world close this mouth, that you may see (it) plain

O mouth, verily thou art the mouth of Hell, and, O world, thou art like the intermediate state[3]

The everlasting light is beside this low world, the pure milk is beside rivers of blood

When you take one step in it (the world) without precaution, your milk will be turned to blood through commixture

15 Adam took one step in sensual pleasure separation from his high place in Paradise became a collar on the neck of his (fleshly) soul

The angels were fleeing from him as from a devil how many tears did he shed for the sake of a single loaf!

Although the sin which he had compassed was (but) a hair, yet that hair had grown in his eyes

Adam was the eye of the Eternal Light a hair in the eye is a great mountain

[1] Literally, "the rising point of the date (of composition)."

[2] Literally, this trading and profit

[3] The spirit came from God and will return to God The present life is its intermediate state

If Adam had taken counsel in that (matter), he would not have uttered excuses in penitence,

Because when one intellect is joined with another intellect, it prevents evil action and evil speech,

(But) when the fleshly soul is associated with another fleshly soul, the partial (individual) intellect becomes idle and useless

When because of loneliness you fall into despair, you become (bright as) a sun (if you go) under the shadow (protection) of the friend

Go, seek at once the friend of God when you have done so, God is your friend

He who has fixed his gaze upon seclusion (and made it his object), after all 'tis from the friend (of God) that he has learned that (lesson)

One must seclude one's self from strangers, (but) not from the friend the fur-coat is for winter, not for spring

(If) the intellect is paired with another intellect, light increases and the way becomes plain,

(But if) the fleshly soul makes merry[1] with another fleshly soul, darkness increases, the way becomes hidden

The friend is thine eye, O huntsman keep him pure from (unsoiled by) sticks and straws

Beware! Do not make a dust with thy tongue's broom, do not make a present of rubbish to thine eye

Since the true believer is a mirror for the true believer, his face is safe from defilement[2]

The friend is a mirror for the soul in sorrow breathe not on the face of the mirror, O my soul!

Lest it cover its face on account of thy breath, thou must swallow (suppress) thy breath at every moment

Art thou less than earth? When a plot of earth finds a friend, that is, a springtide, it finds (gains) a hundred thousand flowers

The tree that is united with a friend, that is, the sweet air (of spring), blossoms from head to foot,

In autumn, when it sees (meets with) a repugnant companion, it withdraws its face and head under the coverlet

And says, "A bad comrade is (the means of) stirring up trouble since he has come, my (best) course is to sleep

Therefore I will sleep, I will be (like) one of the Men of the Cave (the Seven Sleepers) that prisoner of woe (that sorely distressed one) is better than Decianus"

Their time of waking was expended by (was at the disposal of) Decianus, their sleep was the capital (fundamental source) of their renown

[1] Literally, "becomes laughing," i e friendly and familiar

[2] I e he being entirely pure, reflects thy spiritual state and shows thee what thou really art

Sleep, when it is accompanied by wisdom, is (spiritual) wakefulness, (but) alas for the man awake who consorts with the ignorant!

40 When the crows pitch their tents on Bahman (January), the nightingales hide themselves and are mute,

Because the nightingale is silent without the rose-garden the absence of the sun kills (the nightingale's) wakefulness

O sun, thou takest leave of this rose-garden (the earth) in order to illumine (the region) below the earth,

(But) the Sun of Divine knowledge has no motion its place of rising is naught but the spirit and the intellect,

Especially the perfect Sun which is of yonder (world of Reality) day and night its action is (giving) illumination

45 If thou art an Alexander, come to the Sun's rising-place after that, wheresoever thou goest, thou art possessed of goodly splendour

After that, wheresoever thou goest, 'twill become the place of sunrise (all) the places of sunrise will be in love with thy place of sunset

Thy bat-like senses are running towards the sunset, thy pearl-scattering senses are faring towards the sunrise

The way of (physical) sense-perception is the way of asses, O rider have shame, O thou that art jostling (vying) with asses!

Besides these five (physical) senses there are five (spiritual) senses those (latter) are like red gold, while these (physical) senses are like copper

50 In the bazaar where they (the buyers) are expert, how should they buy the copper sense like (as though it were) the sense of gold?

The bodily sense is eating the food of darkness, the spiritual sense is feeding from a Sun

O thou that hast borne the baggage of thy senses to the Unseen, put forth thy hand, like Moses, from thy bosom

O thou whose attributes are (those of) the Sun of Divine knowledge, while the sun in heaven is confined to a single attribute,

Now thou becomest the Sun, and now the Sea, now the mountain of Qáf, and now the 'Anqa

55 In thine essence thou art neither this nor that, O thou that art greater than (all) imaginations and more than (all) more!

The Spirit is associated (endued) with knowledge and reason what has the Spirit to do with Arabic and Turkish?

Both the *muwahhid* (who asserts the transcendence of God) and the *mushabbih* (who asserts His immanence) are bewildered by thee, O thou who, being without image (external appearance), art (appearing) in so many forms

Sometimes the *muwahhad* (God regarded as the only real Being)

is destroying the ***mushabbih*** (who asserts that God is immanent in forms), sometimes (these) forms are waylaying the ***muwahhid*** (so that he cannot gain access to God who transcends all forms)

Sometimes Abu 'l-Hasan in drunkenness (ecstasy) says to thee, "O thou whose teeth are small (whose years are few), O thou whose body is tender!"

Sometimes he is laying waste (ruining and defacing) his own image he is destroying (it) in order to assert the transcendence of the Beloved (God)

The doctrine held by the eye of sense is Mu'tazilism, whereas the eye of Reason is Sunnite (orthodox) in respect of (its) union (vision of God)

Those in thrall to sense-perception are Mu'tazilites, (though) from misguidedness they represent themselves as Sunnites

Any one who remains in (bondage to) sense-perception is a Mu'tazilite, though he may say he is a Sunnite, 'tis from ignorance

Any one who has escaped from (the bondage of) sense-perception is a Sunnite the man endowed with (spiritual) vision is the eye of sweet-paced (harmonious) Reason

If the animal sense could see the King (God), then the ox and the ass would behold Allah

If, besides the animal sense, thou hadst not another sense outside of (unconditioned by) the desire of the flesh,

Then how should the sons of Adam have been honoured? How by means of the common sense[1] should they have become privileged (to know these mysteries)?

Your calling (God) "formless" (transcending forms) or "formed" (immanent in forms) is vain, without your liberation from form (unless you yourself are freed from sense-perception)

(Whether God is) "formless" or "formed," He is with him that is all kernel and has gone forth from the husk

If you are blind, *'tis no crime in the blind*, (but) if not, go (persevere in purifying yourself), for patience is the key to success

The medicine of patience will burn the veils over your eye and will also effect the opening of your breast (to Divine knowledge)

When the mirror of your heart becomes clear and pure, you will behold images (which are) outside of (the world of) water and earth

You will behold both the image and the image-Maker, both the carpet of (spiritual) empire and the carpet-Spreader

The phantom (seen in mystical vision) of my Friend seemed (to me) like Khalîl (Abraham)—its form an idol, its reality a breaker of idols

[1] *I e* the senses which Man has in common with other animals

75 Thanks be to God that when he appeared, my spirit beheld in his phantom its own phantom (reflected image)

The dust of thy threshold was bewitching my heart dust (woe) on him that was patient without thy dust!

I said, "If I am beautiful, I shall receive this (dust of Divine grace and love) from him, and if not, he has indeed laughed at ugly me

The (best) plan is this, that I look at myself (to see whether I am worthy of him), otherwise (if I am not worthy), he will laugh at me how shall I buy (gain his love)?"

He is beautiful and a lover of beauty how should a fresh young man choose a decrepit old woman?

80 The Beautiful attracts the beautiful[1] (to itself) know this (for sure) Recite thereon (the text) *the good women for the good men*

In this world everything attracts something the hot draws the hot (to itself) and the cold the cold

The worthless sort attract the worthless, the lasting (those of lasting worth) are rejoiced by the lasting

Those of the Fire attract those of the Fire, those of the Light seek those of the Light

When you shut your eye, you felt uncomfortable[2] how could the light of the eye do without the light of the window?

85 Your discomfort was (caused by) the light in your eye straining to be joined speedily with the daylight

If you feel distress (within) while your eyes are unclosed, know that you have shut the eye of your heart, (and) open it

Recognise that that (distress) is the craving of the eyes of your heart which is seeking the immeasurable Light

Inasmuch as separation from those two impermanent lights brought you discomfort, (so that) you opened your eyes,

Separation, then, from those two steadfast (everlasting) lights will bring you discomfort guard them (well)!

90 Since He is calling me, I will look to see whether I am worthy to be drawn (to Him) or whether I am ill-favoured

If a charming person makes an ugly one (follow) at his heels, 'tis (but) a mockery that he makes of him

How, I wonder, shall I behold my own face, so as to see what complexion I have and whether I am like day or like night?

For a long while I was seeking the image of my soul, (but) my image was not displayed (reflected) by any one

"After all," I said, "what is a mirror for? (The use of it is this), that every one may know what and who he is"

95 The mirror of iron is (only) for husks (external forms), the mirror that shows the aspect of the heart is of great price

The soul's mirror is naught but the face of the friend, the

[1] Literally, "beauty" or "a beautiful one"
[2] Literally "discomfort overtook you

face of that friend who is of yonder country (the spiritual land)

I said, "O heart, seek the Universal Mirror, go to the Sea the business will not succeed (be successfully accomplished) by means of the river "

In this quest thy slave (at last) arrived at thy dwelling-place, (as) the pains (of childbirth) drew Mary to the palm-tree

When thine eye became an eye for my heart, my blind heart went and became drowned in vision

I saw that thou art the Universal Mirror unto everlasting I saw my own image in thine eye

I said, "At last I have found myself in his eyes I have found the shining Way "

My false instinct said, "Beware! That (image) is (only) thy phantom distinguish thy essence from thy phantom",

(But) my image gave voice (spoke) from thine eye (and said), "I am thou and thou art I in (perfect) oneness,

For how should a phantom find the way into this illumined eye which never ceases from (contemplating) the (Divine) realities?"

(Thou saidst), "If you behold your image in the eyes of any other than me, know that 'tis a phantom and reprobate,

Because he (every one except me) is applying (to his eye) the collyrium of non-existence (unreality) and is imbibing the wine of Satan's illusion-making

Their eye is the home of phantasy and non-existence necessarily it sees as existent the things which are non-existent,

(But) since my eye saw (got) collyrium from the Glorious (God), it is the home of (real) existence, not the home of phantasy "

So long as a single hair of you is before your eye, in your phantasy a pearl will be as jasper

You will know jasper from pearls (only) at the time when you pass away from (abandon) your phantasy entirely

O connoisseur of pearls, listen to a story, that you may distinguish actual seeing from (mere) inference

How in the time of 'Umar, may God be well-pleased with him, a certain person imagined that what he saw was the new moon

The Fasting-month (Ramadan) came round in 'Umar's time Some people ran to the top of a hill,

In order to take (the appearance of) the new moon as a good omen, and one of them said, "Look, O 'Umar, here is the new moon!"

As 'Umar did not see the moon in the sky, he said, "This moon has risen from thy phantasy

115 Otherwise, (since) I am a better seer of the heavens (than thou), how is it that I do not see the pure crescent?

Wet thy hand," said he, "and rub it on thine eyebrow, and then look up towards the new moon."

When he wetted his eyebrow, he did not see the moon. "O King," he said, "there is no moon; it has disappeared."

"Yes," said 'Umar, "the hair of thine eyebrow had become (curved) like a bow and shot at thee an arrow of opinion."

When one hair became crooked, it waylaid him (hindered him from seeing truly), so that, making a false claim, he boasted to have seen the moon.

120 Inasmuch as a crooked hair veils the sky, how will it be when all your members are crooked?

Straighten your members by (the help of) the straight (the righteous). O you who (would) go straight, turn not your head aside from that threshold (where the righteous dwell).

Balance makes balance correct; balance also makes balance defective.[1]

Whoever weighs the same (adopts the same standard) as the unrighteous falls into deficiency, and his understanding becomes dazed.

Go, *be hard on the infidels*, sprinkle dust on (renounce) fondness for the strangers.

125 Be as a sword upon the heads of the strangers: come, do not play foxy tricks, be a lion,

In order that the friends (of God), moved by (righteous) jealousy, may not break with you, because those thorns (the wicked) are the enemies of this rose (the friend of God).

Set fire to the wolves as (to) rue-seed, because those wolves are the enemies of Joseph.

Iblís calls you "father's soul" (darling son)—beware (of him)! The accursed Devil (does that) in order that he may beguile you with (vain) words.

He practised the like imposture on your father: this black-faced one checkmated an Adam.

130 This crow is busy on the chessboard; look not you upon his game with an eye that is half-asleep,

Because he knows many formidable moves which will stick in your throat like a straw.

His straw will stay in your throat for years. What is that straw? Love of rank and wealth.

Wealth is the straw, since in your throat, O infirm one, it is an obstacle (barrier) to the Water of Life.

If an artful enemy carry off your wealth, a robber will have carried off a robber.

[1] *I.e.* a true standard corrects a false one, and a false standard corrupts a true one.

How a snake-catcher stole a snake from another snake-catcher

A petty thief carried off a snake from a snake-catcher and in his folly was accounting it a prize

The snake-catcher escaped from the snake's bite, the man who had robbed him was miserably killed by the snake

The snake-catcher saw him (dead), then he recognised him and said, "My snake has emptied him of life

My soul was desiring of Him (God) in prayer that I might find him and take the snake from him

Thanks to God that that prayer was rejected I thought 'twas loss, but it has turned out to be gain "

Many are the prayers which are loss and destruction, and from kindness the Holy God is not hearing them

How the companion of Jesus, on whom be peace, entreated Jesus, on whom be peace, to give life to the bones

A certain foolish person accompanied Jesus (on his way) He espied some bones in a deep-dug hole

He said, "O companion, (teach me) that exalted Name by which thou makest the dead to live,

Teach (it) me, that I may do good and by means of it endow the bones with life "

Jesus said, "Be silent, for that is not thy work 'tis not meet for thy breath and speech,

For it wants breath purer than rain and more piercing in action than the angels

(Many) lifetimes were needed that the breath might be purified, so that he (its owner) was entrusted with the treasury of the Heavens

(Suppose that) thou hast grasped this rod firmly in thy hand whence will accrue to thy hand the cunning of Moses?"

He said, "If I am not one to pronounce (such sacred) mysteries, do thou pronounce the Name over the bones "

Jesus cried, "O Lord, what are these hidden purposes (of Thine)? What is (the meaning of) this fool's inclination (to engage) in this fruitless work?

How has this sick man no care for himself? How has this corpse no care for (spiritual) life?

He has left (uncared for) his own dead (soul) and seeks to mend (revive) the dead (bones) of a stranger "

God (answered and) said, "The backslider seeks backsliding[1] the thistle that has grown (in him) is the retribution for (consequence of) his sowing "

[1] *I e* those who are doomed to perdition seek their own perdition '

He that sows the seed of thistles in the world, be warned not to look for him in the rose-garden

If he take a rose in his hand, it becomes a thistle, and if he go to a friend, he (the friend) becomes a snake

155 The damned wretch is an elixir which transmutes into poison and snakes, (his elixir is) contrary to the elixir of the God-fearing man

How the Súfí enjoined the servant to take care of his beast and how the servant said, "Lá hawl[1]"

A Súfí was wandering round the world till one night he became a guest at a monastery (for Súfís)

He had a beast (ass) he tied it in the stable, (while) he (himself) sat at the top of the dais with his friends

Then he engaged with his friends in (mystical) meditation the presence of the friend (of God) is a book, (and) more

The Súfí's book is not (composed of) ink and letters it is naught but a heart white as snow

160 The scholar's provision is (consists of) pen-marks (written letters and words) What is the Súfí's provision? Footmarks

He (the Súfí) stalks the game, like a hunter he sees the musk-deer's track and follows the footprints

For some while the track of the deer is (the) proper (clue) for him, (but) afterwards 'tis the navel (musk-gland) of the deer that is his guide

When he has given thanks for (having been favoured with knowledge of) the track and has traversed the way, of necessity by means of that track he arrives at a goal[2]

To go one stage (guided) by the scent of the musk-gland is better than a hundred stages of (following) the track and roaming about

165 The heart that is the rising-place of the moonbeams (of Divine light) is the opening of the doors (of Reality) for the gnostic

To you it is a wall, to them it is a door, to you a stone, to (those) venerated ones a pearl

What you see plainly in the mirror—the Pír sees more than that in the brick

The Pírs are they whose spirits, before this world existed, were in the Sea of (Divine) bounty

Before (the creation of) this body they passed (many) lifetimes, before the sowing they took up (harvested) the wheat

170 They have received the spirit before (the creation of) the form, they have bored the pearls before (the creation of) the sea

[1] Equivalent to 'Good gracious!"

[2] Literally, "an object of desire"

(Whilst) consultation was going on as to bringing mankind into existence, their spirits were in the Sea of (Divine) Omnipotence up to the throat

When the angels were opposing that (creation of man), they (the Pírs) were secretly clapping their hands (in derision) at the angels

He (the Pír) was made acquainted with the (material) form of every existent being, before this Universal Soul became fettered (by materiality)

Before the (creation of the) heavens they have seen Saturn, before the (existence of) seeds they have seen the bread

Without brain and mind they were full of thought, without army and battle they gained victory

That immediate intuition (intuitive knowledge) in relation to them is thought, else, indeed, in relation to those who are far (from God) it is vision

Thought is of the past and future, when it is emancipated from these two, the difficulty is solved

The spirit has beheld the wine in the grape, the spirit has beheld thing (entity) in nothing (nonentity),

It has beheld every conditioned thing as unconditioned, it has beheld the genuine coin and the alloyed before (the existence of) the mine,

Before the creation of grapes it has quaffed wines and shown the excitements (of intoxication)

In hot July they (the Pírs) see December, in the sunbeams they see the shade

In the heart of the grape they have seen the wine, in absolute *fana* (privation of objectivity) they have seen the object

The sky is draining draughts from their circling cup, the sun is clad in cloth of gold by their bounty

When you see two of them met together as friends, they are one, and at the same time (they are) six hundred thousand

Their numbers are in the likeness of waves the wind will have brought them into number (into plurality from unity)

The Sun, which is the spirits, became separated (broken into rays) in the windows, which are bodies

When you gaze on the Sun's disk, it is itself one, but he that is screened by (his perception of) the bodies is in some doubt

Separation (plurality) is in the animal spirit, the human spirit is one essence

Inasmuch as *God sprinkled His light upon them* (*mankind*), (they are essentially one) His light never becomes separated (in reality)

O my comrade on the way, dismiss thy weariness for a moment, that I may describe a single mole (grain) of that Beauty

The beauty of His state cannot be set forth what are both the worlds (temporal and spiritual)? The reflexion of His mole

When I breathe a word concerning His beauteous mole, my speech would fain burst my body

Like an ant, I am so happy in this granary that I am dragging a burden too great for me

How the explanation of the (inner) meaning of the tale was stopped because of the hearer's desire to hear the superficial form of it

When will He who is envied by Light allow me to tell that which is obligatory and ought to be told?

The sea casts foam in front (of it) and makes a barrier it draws back and after drawing back flows in (again)

Hear what has interfered (hindered my exposition) at the present time methinks the hearer's mind has wandered elsewhere

His thoughts have turned to the Sufi guest he is sunk up to the neck (wholly absorbed) in that business[1]

(Therefore) it behoves me to go back from this discourse to that story in order to describe what happened (to him)

O dear friend, do not fancy the Sufi is the (external) form (which you behold) how long, like children, (will you be content) with walnuts and raisins?

Our body is (as) walnuts and raisins, O son, if you are a man, relinquish these two things,

And (even) if you do not relinquish them (by your own act), the grace of God will enable you to pass beyond the nine tiers (of Heaven)

Now listen to the outward form of the tale, but take heed to separate the grain from the chaff

How the people of the caravan supposed the Sufi's beast was ill

When at last (the meditation of) that circle of Sufis who were seeking (spiritual) profit came to an end (culminated) in ecstasy and enthusiasm,

They brought dishes of food for the guest, and he then bethought him of his beast

He said to the famulus (the servant of the Sufis), "Go into the stable and make the straw and barley all right for the animal"

"Good gracious[2]!" he replied, "why this saying overmuch? These things have been my care since long ago"

The Sufi said, "First wet his barley, for 'tis an old ass, and his teeth are shaky"

[1] Or "passion (to hear the story)

[2] *Lā ḥawl*, lit "there is no power (except in God)"

"Good gracious!" said he, "why are you telling (me) this, Sir? They are taught by me (to make) these arrangements."

The Súfí said, "First of all take off[1] his saddle and (then) put the salve of *manbal* on his sore back."

"Good gracious!" exclaimed the servant. "Why, O purveyor of wisdom, I have had a thousand guests of your sort,

And all have departed from us well-pleased: the guest is (dear to us as) our life and our kinsman."

The Súfí said, "Give him water, but (let it be) lukewarm." "Good gracious!" cried the other, "I am ashamed of you."

The Súfí said, "Put (only) a little straw in his barley." "Good gracious! Cut short this speech," he replied.

The Súfí said, "Sweep his place (clear) of stones and dung, and if it is wet, sprinkle dry earth on it."

"Good gracious!" cried he, "implore God's grace[2], O father, and say little (give few instructions) to a messenger who knows his business."

The Súfí said, "Take the comb and curry the ass's back." "Good gracious! do have some shame, O father," said he.

The servant said this and briskly girded up his loins. "I go," said he, "first I will fetch the straw and barley."

Off he went and never thought of the stable at all: he gave that Súfí (a pretence like) the sleep of the hare.[3]

The servant went off to (join) some rascals and made a mockery of the Súfí's admonition.

The Súfí was fatigued by his journey and stretched his limbs (lay down to sleep): with his eyes closed he was dreaming

That his ass was left (helpless) in the clutch of a wolf, (which) was tearing pieces (of flesh) from its back and thighs.

"Good gracious!" he exclaimed, "what sort of melancholy (madness) is this? Oh, where is that kindly servant?"

Again he would see his ass going along the road and falling now into a well and now into a ditch.

He was dreaming various unpleasant dreams; he was reciting the *Fátiha* and the *Qári'a*.

He said (to himself), "What can be done to help? My friends have hurried out: they have departed and made all the doors fast."

Again he would say, "Oh, I wonder—that wretched servant! Did not he partake of bread and salt with us?

I showed him nothing but courtesy and mildness: why should he on the contrary show hatred towards me?

[1] Literally, "put down (aside)."

[2] Literally, "say *Lá hawl*."

[3] *I.e.* he caused him to believe in his vigilance, while he was really negligent.

Every enmity must rest on some cause, otherwise, our common humanity[1] would dictate faithfulness (in friendship)."

Then he would say again, "When had Adam, the kind and generous, done an injury to Iblís?

230 What was done by man to snake and scorpion that they wish (to inflict) death and pain upon him?

To rend is the instinct of the wolf; after all, this envy is conspicuous in mankind."

Again he would say, "It is wrong thus to think evil; why have I such thoughts against my brother?"

Then he would say, "Prudence consists in your thinking evil: how shall he that thinks no evil remain unhurt?"

The Ṣúfí was in (this) anxiety, and (meanwhile) the ass was in such a plight that—may it befall our enemies[2]!

235 That poor ass was amidst earth and stones, with his saddle crooked and his halter torn,

Killed (exhausted) by the journey, without fodder all the night long, now at the last gasp and now perishing.

All night the ass was repeating, "O God, I give up the barley, (but am I to have) less than one handful of straw?"

With mute eloquence he was saying, "O Shaykhs, (have) some pity, for I am consumed (with anguish) because of this raw impudent rogue."

What that ass suffered of pain and torment, the land-bird suffers (the same) in a flood of water.

240 Then (all) that night till dawn the wretched ass, from exceeding hunger, rolled on his side.

Day rose. The servant came at morn and quickly looked for the saddle and laid it on the ass's back.

After the fashion of ass-dealers he gave him two or three blows (with a goad): he did to the ass what is befitting from such a cur (as he was).

The sharpness of the sting set the ass jumping, where is the tongue (has an ass such a tongue) that he may describe his own state (feelings)?

When the Ṣúfí mounted and got going, he (the ass) began to fall on his face every time,

245 (And) every time the people (the travellers) lifted him up they all thought he was ill.

One would twist his ears hard, while another sought for the (lacerated) part under his palate,

And another searched for the stone in his shoe, and another looked at the dirt in his eye.

Also they were saying, "O Shaykh, what is the cause of this? Were not you saying yesterday, 'Thanks (to God), this ass is strong'?"

[1] Literally "our being congeners."
[2] Literally "may it be the retribution of enemies!"

He replied, "The ass that ate *Lá hawl*[1] during the night cannot get along except in this manner

Inasmuch as the ass's food by night was *Lá hawl*, he was 250
glorifying God by night and (is engaged) in prostrating himself by day"

Most people are man-eaters put no trust[2] in their saying, "Peace to you"

The hearts of all are the Devil's house do not accept (listen to) the palaver of devilish men

He that swallows *Lá hawl* from the breath (mouth) of the Devil, like that ass falls headlong in the fight

Whoever swallows the Devil's imposture in this world and (swallows) veneration and deceit from the foe that has the face (semblance) of a friend,

In the Way of Islam and on the bridge Sirát he will fall upon 255
his head from giddiness, like that ass

Beware! Do not hearken to the blandishments of the bad friend espy the snare, do not walk securely on the earth

See the hundred thousand devils who utter *La hawl*! O Adam, in the serpent behold Iblís!

He gives (you) vain words, he says to you, "O my soul and beloved," that he may strip the skin off his beloved, like a butcher

He gives vain words that he may strip off your skin woe to him that tastes opium from (the mouth of) enemies

He lays his head at your feet (in flattery) and butcher-like 260
gives (you) vain (wheedling) words, that he may shed your blood miserably

Like a lion, hunt your prey yourself leave (pay no heed to) the blandishment of stranger or kinsman

Know that the regard of the base is like that servant, 'tis better to have nobody (as your friend) than (to accept) the flattery of nobodies (worthless people)

Do not make your home in (other) men's land do your own work, don't do the work of a stranger

Who is the stranger? Your earthen body, for the sake of which is (all) your sorrow

So long as you are giving your body greasy (rich) and sweet 265
(food), you will not see fatness in your (spiritual) essence

If the body be set in the midst of musk, (yet) on the day of death its stench will become manifest

Do not put musk on your body, rub it on your heart What is musk? The holy name of the Glorious (God)

The hypocrite puts musk on his body and puts his spirit at the bottom of the ash-pit

[1] *I e* 'implored God to help him'
[2] Literally, "do not seek safety"

On his tongue the name of God, and in his soul stenches (arising) from his infidel thought.

270 In relation to him praise of God is (like) the herbage of the ash-pit: it is roses and lilies (growing) upon a dunghill.

Those plants are certainly there on loan (and belong to somewhere else); the proper place for those flowers is the symposium and (the scene of) festivity.

The good women come to *the good men*; there is (also the text) *to the wicked men the wicked women*. Mark!

Do not bear malice: they that are led astray by malice, their graves are placed beside the malicious.

The origin of malice is Hell, and your malice is a part of that whole and is the enemy of your religion.

275 Since you are a part of Hell, take care! The part gravitates towards its whole.

He that is bitter will assuredly be attached to those who are bitter: how should vain breath (false words) be joined with the truth?

O brother, you are that same thought (of yours); as for the rest (of you), you are (only) bone and fibre.

If your thought is a rose, you are a rose-garden; and if it is a thorn, you are fuel for the bath-stove.

If you are rose-water, you are sprinkled on head and bosom; and if you are (stinking) like urine, you are cast out.

280 Look at the trays in front of druggists—each kind put beside its own kind,

Things of each sort mixed with things of the same sort, and a certain elegance produced by this homogeneity;

If his (the druggist's) aloes-wood and sugar get mixed, he picks them out from each other, piece by piece.

The trays were broken and the souls were spilled: good and evil ones were mingled with each other.

God sent the prophets with scrolls (of Revelation), that He might pick out (and sort) these grains on the dish.

285 Before this[1] we were one community; none knew whether we were good or bad.

False coin and fine (both) were current in the world, since all was night, and we were as night-travellers,

Until the sun of the prophets rose and said, "Begone, O alloy! Come, O thou that art pure!"

The eye can distinguish colours, the eye knows ruby and (common) stone.

The eye knows the jewel and the rubbish; hence bits of rubbish sting the eye.

290 These vile counterfeiters are enemies of day; those pieces of gold from the mine are lovers of day,

[1] *I.e.* before the prophets were sent.

Because day is the mirror that makes it (the fine gold) known, so that the *ashrafi* (the coin of sterling gold) may see (receive) its (day's) gift of honour

Hence God bestowed the title of "Day" on the Resurrection, (for) day displays the beauty of red and yellow

In reality, then, day is the inmost consciousness of the saints, (though) beside their moon day is (dim) as shadows

Know that day is the reflexion of the mystery (the illumined consciousness) of the man of God, while eye-sealing night is the reflexion of his occultation[1]

For that reason God said, *By the morn* *by the morn* is (refers to) the light of the hidden mind of Mustafá (Mohammed)

The other view, that the Beloved (God) meant this morn (in the literal sense), is (held) just for the reason that this too is the reflexion of him,

Else it is wrong to swear by a transient thing how indeed is transiency proper to the speech of God?

That Friend (Abraham) said, "*I love not them that set*" how should the glorious Lord mean transiency by this (oath)?

Again, *and by the night* is (refers to) his occultation and his earthen rust-dark body

When his sun rose from that sky, it said to the night of the body, "Lo, *He hath not forsaken thee*"

Union was made manifest out of the essence of affliction that sweetness (of union) was expressed by (the words) *He hath not hated* (*thee*)

In fact, every expression is the symbol of a state the state is as a hand, while the expression is a tool

The goldsmith's tool in the hand of a shoemaker is like a seed sown in sand,

And the cobbler's tool (put) before the husbandman is (as) straw before a dog (or) bones before an ass

"I am God" on the lips of Mansur[2] was the light (of truth), "I am Allah" on the lips of Pharaoh was a lie

In the hand of Moses the rod became a witness (to the truth), in the hand of the magician the rod became (worthless as) motes in the air

On this account Jesus did not teach his fellow-traveller that Name of the Lord,

For he would not know (its proper use) and would attribute imperfection to the tool (which he misused) Strike stone on clay, and how should fire leap forth?

Hand and tool are as stone and iron, there must be a pair (the existence of) a pair is the condition (necessary) for bringing to birth

[1] *I e* the state in which the saint's consciousness is not illumined by God
[2] Hallāj

310 The One is He who hath no consort and no tool, in number there is doubt, and that One is beyond doubt

Those who say "two" or "three" or more than these (numbers) are certainly agreed in (affirming the existence of) One

When squinting has been put aside (so that they see correctly), they become alike the assertors of two or three become assertors of Unity

If you are a ball[1] in His polo-field, keep spinning round from (the blows of) His polo-stick

The ball becomes right and flawless (only) at the time when it is made to dance by the stroke of the King's hand

315 Give ear heedfully to these (sayings), O squinting one apply the eye-salve by way of the ear

Holy words, then, do not abide in blind hearts, (but) go to the Light whence they came,

While the (guileful) spell of the Devil goes into crooked (perverse) hearts as a crooked shoe on to a crooked foot

Though you may learn Wisdom by rote, it becomes quit of you when you are unworthy (to receive it),

And though you write it and note it (down), and though you brag (about it) and expound it,

320 It withdraws its face from you, O disputatious one it snaps its bonds and (takes) flight from you

(But) if you read not and it sees your ardour (of love), Knowledge will be a bird docile (and obedient) to your hand

It does not abide with every unskilled tiro (it is) like a peacock (which does not stay) in the house of a peasant

How the King found his falcon in the house of a decrepit old woman

It is not like the falcon that fled from the King to the old crone who was sifting flour

That she might cook *tutmaj* for her children (When) she saw the beautiful well-born falcon,

325 She tied its little foot and clipped its wings, she cut its talons and fed it with straw

"Unworthy folk," said she, "have not kept thee in (good) trim thy wings are overgrown and thy talons have become long

Every unworthy one's hand makes thee ill come to thy mother that she may take care of thee"

Know, O friend, that such is the affection of the fool the fool ever walks crookedly on the way

The King's day became late (far-spent) in searching (for the falcon) he went (at last) to the old woman and the tent (where she lived)

[1] The words translated "if you are a ball" may also signify "if you are an assertor of Unity"

Suddenly he espied the falcon amidst smoke and dust the King wept sorely over it and made lament

He said, "Albeit this is the retribution for thy deed, in that thou art not firm in keeping faith with me,

(Yet) how shouldst thou make Hell thy abode after Paradise, heedless of (the text) *the people of the Fire* (*and those of Paradise*) *are not equal*?

This is the fitting reward for one that unconscionably flees from the King who knows (him) well to the house of an old hag"

(Meanwhile) the falcon was rubbing its wings against the King's hand without tongue it was saying, "I have sinned"

Where then should the vile (sinner) plead piteously, where should he moan, if Thou wilt accept naught but good, O bountiful (King)?

The King's grace makes the soul sin-seeking, because the King makes every foul thing fair

Go, do not commit foulness, for (even) our fair deeds appear foul in the sight of our beauteous (Loved One)

You deemed your service worthy thereby you raised the banner of sin

Forasmuch as praise and prayer were vouchsafed to you, through making that prayer your heart became vainglorious

You regarded yourself as speaking (confidentially) with God Oh, (there is) many a one that becomes separated (from God) by this opinion

Although the King sit with you on the ground, know yourself and sit better (with more decorum and reverence)

The falcon said, "O King, I am penitent, I am converted, I am embracing Islam anew

He whom Thou makest drunken and pot-valiant[1]—if from drunkenness he walk crookedly, do Thou accept his excuse

Though my talons are gone, when thou art mine I tear off the forelock of the sun,

And though my wings are gone, when Thou art kind to me the heavenly sphere lessens its play (slackens the speed of its revolution in amazement) at my play (swift and sportive flight)

If Thou bestow a belt on me, I will uproot the mountain, if Thou give me a pen, I will break the banners[2]

After all, my body is not inferior to (that of) a gnat with my wings I confound the kingdom of Nimrod

Suppose me to be (as) the flocks of (small) birds[3] in weakness, suppose every one of my enemies to be as the elephant[4],

[1] Literally, 'lion-catching'

[2] *I e* the lances to which flags are attached

[3] Referring to Qur'án, cv, 3

[4] Qur'án, cv, 1

(Yet if) I cast a baked (clay) pellet the size of a hazel-nut, my pellet in its effect is like (equal to) a hundred mangonels (ballistas)."

350 Moses came to battle with his one rod and made an onset against Pharaoh and (all) his swords.

Every Prophet who by himself has knocked at that door (and besought God to help him) has alone (single-handed) fought (victoriously) against the whole world.

When Noah begged of Him (God) a sword, through Him (at His command) the waves of the Flood became of sword-like temper.

O Ahmad (Mohammed), who (what) indeed are the armies of the earth? Behold the moon in heaven (and) split her brow[1],

In order that the ignorant astronomer[2] may know that this cycle is thy cycle, not the cycle of the moon.

355 It is thy cycle, because (even) Moses, he who spoke (with God), was constantly yearning after this cycle of thine.

When Moses beheld the splendour of thy cycle, in which the dawn of Revelation was arising,

He said, "O Lord, what cycle of mercy is that? It is beyond mercy: there (in that cycle) is vision (of Thee).

Plunge Thy Moses in the seas (of Time) and bring him up (to the surface) from the midst of the cycle of Ahmad (Mohammed)."

God said, "O Moses, on that account[3] I have shown (it) to thee, on that account I have opened to thee the way to that (spiritual) communion (with Mohammed),

360 Because in this (present) cycle, O Kalím[4], thou art far from that (cycle of Mohammed and canst not attain to it): draw back thy foot, for this blanket is (too) long (for thee).

I am kind, I show My servant bread in order that desire (for it) may cause that living one to weep.

A mother rubs the nose of her babe, that it may wake and seek some food—

For it may have fallen asleep hungry unawares, and (on waking) it prods her two breasts for the sake of (getting) milk.

I was a treasure, a hidden mercy, so I sent forth a rightly guided Imám."

365 Every (Divine) grace that you are seeking with (all) your soul, He showed it to you that you might desire it.

How many idols did Ahmad (Mohammed) break in the world, that the (religious) communities might cry "O Lord"!

[1] Referring to Qur'án liv. 1.
[2] Literally, '(the observer of) the stars which bring good or bad luck.'
[3] I.e. 'in order that the sight of it may cause thee to desire it (spiritually), though it is out of thy reach (temporally).'
[4] Interlocutor. Moses is so called, because he conversed with God.

Had it not been for the efforts of Ahmad, you also, like your ancestors, would be worshipping idols

This head of yours has been delivered from bowing to idols, in order that you may acknowledge his rightful claim upon the (gratitude of the religious) communities

If you speak, speak thanks for this deliverance, that he may also deliver you from the idol within

Since he has delivered your head from idols, do you deliver your heart also by means of that strength (which you have gained from him)

You have neglected[1] to give thanks for the Religion because you got it for nothing as an inheritance from your father

How should a man who inherits know the value of wealth? A Rustam tore his soul (suffered agonies in acquiring it), (whereas) Zál got it cost-free

"When I cause (any one) to weep, My mercy is aroused that wailer drinks of (enjoys) My bounty

If I do not wish to give, (then) indeed I do not show him (the desired gift), (but) when I have closed (contracted) his heart (with grief), I open (expand) it (with joy)

My mercy is dependent on that goodly weeping when he weeps, waves rise from the sea of (My) mercy"

How by Divine inspiration Shaykh Ahmad son of Khizruya, may God sanctify his revered spirit, bought halwa (sweetmeat) for his creditors

There was a Shaykh who was continually in debt because of the generosity which that illustrious one had (in his nature)

He used to make myriads of debts (by borrowing) from the great, and spend (all the money) upon the poor (dervishes) of the world

He had also built a monastery (for Sufís) by (running into) debt, he had devoted life and wealth and monastery (to God)

God was paying his debts from every quarter God made flour out of sand for the Friend's (Abraham's) sake

The prophet said that two angels are (always) praying here in the markets, (saying),

"O God, do Thou give the prodigal a boon in return, and O God do Thou give the miserly a bane (in return)"

Especially (does this apply to) the prodigal who has freely spent his soul (life) and made his throat a sacrifice to the Creator

He offers his throat, like Ismá'íl (Ishmael) the knife cannot do anything to (hurt) his throat

On this account, then, the martyrs are living in joy do not, infidel-like, look at the body (alone),

[1] Literally "turned your head aside"

385 Since God hath given them in return the spirit of everlastingness—a spirit safe from grief and pain and misery

The debtor Shaykh acted in this fashion for years, taking and giving like a steward

He was sowing seeds till the day of death, that on the day of death he might be a most glorious prince

When the Shaykh's life reached its end and he saw in his (bodily) existence the signs of death,

The creditors were seated together around him, (while) the Shaykh was gently melting on himself, like a candle

390 The creditors had become despairing and sour-faced the pain in (their) hearts was accompanied by pain in (their) lungs[1]

"Look at these evil-thinking men," said the Shaykh "Hath not God four hundred gold dinars?"

A boy outside shouted "*Halwa*!" and bragged of (the excellence of) the *halwá* in hope of (getting) some *dangs*[2]

The Shaykh with (a nod of) his head directed the famulus to go and buy the whole of the *halwa*,

(Saying to himself), "so that the creditors, when they eat the *halwá*, for a (short) while may not look bitterly on me"

395 The famulus at once went out through the doorway to buy with gold the *halwa* entire

He said to the boy, "How much is the *halwa* in the lump?" The boy said, "Half a dinar and some small change"

"Nay," he replied, "don't ask too much from Sufis I will give you half a dinar Say no more"

The boy put the tray before the Shaykh Behold (now) the mysterious secret thoughts of the Shaykh!

He made a sign to the creditors (as though to say), "Look, this gift (of sweetmeat) is a present (to you) eat this gladly, it is lawful (food)"

400 When the tray was emptied, the boy took it and said, "Give me the gold, O Sage"

The Shaykh said, "From where shall I get the money? I am in debt and going towards non-existence"

The boy in (his) grief dashed the tray upon the ground, he raised (his voice in) lamentation and weeping and moaning

The boy was weeping with loud sobs because of the swindle, (and crying), "Would that both my legs had been broken (ere I came hither)!

Would that I had loitered round the bath-stove and had not passed by the door of this monastery!

405 Lickspittle gluttonous[3] Sufis, dogs at heart and washing their faces like cats!"

[1] *I e* their anguish of mind caused them to breathe hard and painfully
[2] The *dang* is the sixth part of a dirhem
[3] Literally, 'seeking (dainty) morsels'

At the boy's clamour all and sundry[1] gathered there and crowded round the boy

He came to the Shaykh and said, "O cruel Shaykh, know for sure that my master will kill me (with blows)

If I go (back) to him empty-handed, he will kill me wilt thou give (him) leave (to do that)?"

And those creditors too turned to the Shaykh with disbelief and denial, saying, "What game was this?

Thou hast devoured our property and art carrying off thy iniquities (to the next world) for what reason was this other injustice (put) on the top (of all the rest)?"

Till afternoon prayers the boy wept, the Shaykh closed his eyes and did not look at him

The Shakyh, unconcerned with abuse and opposition, had withdrawn his moon-like face under the coverlet,

Pleased with eternity, pleased with death, joyous, unconcerned with revilement and the talk of high or low

He in whose face the Beloved smiles sweetly[2], what harm can befall him from the sour looks of (other) people?

He on whose eye the Beloved bestows a kiss, how should he grieve at Heaven and its anger?

On a moonlight night what cares the moon in (the mansion of) Simak for dogs and their barking?

The dog is performing his task, the moon is smoothly fulfilling her task by means of her (bright) countenance

Every one is executing his little business water does not lose purity because of a bit of weed (rubbish)

The weeds float weedily (contemptibly) on the surface of the water the pure water flows on undisturbed

Mustafá (Mohammed) splits the moon at midnight, Abú Lahab from hatred talks drivel[3]

The Messiah (Jesus) brings the dead to life, and the Jew tears his moustache in wrath

Does the dog's bark ever reach the moon's ear, especially that Moon who is the chosen of God?

The king drinks wine on the bank of the stream till dawn, and in listening to the music is unaware of the croaking of the frogs

The division of (the money due to) the boy (amongst the creditors) would have been (only) a few *dangs* (for each to pay), (but) the Shaykh's (spiritual) influence stopped that generosity,

So that no one should give the boy anything the power of the Pírs is even greater than this

(When) it was (time for) afternoon prayers, a servant came with a tray in his hand from one like Hátim,

[1] Literally, "good and bad"

[2] Literally, "like candy"

[3] Literally, "chews thistles"

A man of property and condition he sent it as a present to the Pír (Shaykh), for he knew about him

(There were) four hundred dinars, and in a corner of the tray another half-dinar in a piece of paper

The servant advanced and did honour to the Shaykh, and laid the tray before the peerless Shaykh

430 When he (the Shaykh) uncovered the face of the tray, the people beheld the miracle (manifested) from him

Immediately cries of sorrow and lamentation arose from all —"O head of the Shaykhs and (spiritual) kings, what was (the meaning of) this?

What secret is this? Once more, what sovereignty is this, O lord of the lords of mystery?

We knew not Pardon us Very deranged were the words that went out from us

We who blindly brandish staffs cannot help breaking lamps

435 We, like deaf men, without having heard a single thing spoken (to us), are answering idly from our own surmise

We have not taken warning from Moses, who was made shamefaced[1] by disbelief in a Khizr,

Notwithstanding (that he had) an eye that sped aloft, and the light of his eye was piercing heaven

O Moses (of this age), through foolishness the eye of a mill-mouse has fanatically set itself against thine eye"

The Shaykh said, "I forgive all that talk and palaver it is lawful to you[2]

440 The secret of this (matter) was that I besought God consequently He showed me the right way,

And said, 'Though that dinar is little, yet (the payment of) it is dependent on the boy's outcry

Until the *halwa*-selling boy weeps, the sea of (My) mercy is not aroused'"

O brother, the child (boy) is the child (pupil) of your eye know surely that (the gaining of) your desire is dependent on (tears of) distress

If you wish that that robe of honour (which you desire) should come (to you), then make the child (pupil) of your eye weep over your body

How a certain person frightened an ascetic, saying, "Weep little, lest thou become blind"

445 A comrade in the work (of religion) said to an ascetic, "Weep little, lest thine eye come to harm"

The ascetic said, "The case is not outside of (admits only)

[1] Literally, 'yellow-faced'

[2] *I e* "I acquit you of responsibility for it"

two (alternatives) the eye will see, or it will not see, that (Divine) Beauty

If it see the Light of God, what is there to grieve about? How little are two eyes (to him that is) in union with God!

And if it shall not see God, let it go! Let such a miserable eye become blind!"

Do not grieve for your eye when that Jesus is yours, do not go to the left (but to the right), that he may give you two right (sound) eyes

The Jesus of your spirit is present with you beg aid from 450
him, for he is a goodly aider,

But do not every moment lay on the heart of (that) Jesus the unprofitable work of (providing for) a body full of bones,

Like the fool whom we mentioned in the story for the sake of the righteous

Seek not you from your Jesus the life of the body, ask not from your Moses the wish of a Pharaoh

Burden not your heart with thoughts of livelihood, livelihood will not fail be (constant in attendance) at the (Divine) Court

This body is a tent for the spirit, or like an ark for Noah 455

When the Turcoman is there, he will find a tent, especially when he is one held in honour at the Court (of God)

Conclusion of the story of the coming to life of the bones at the prayer of Jesus, on whom be peace!

Jesus pronounced the Name of God over the bones on account of the young man's entreaty

For the sake of that foolish man the decree of God gave life to the form which those bones had possessed

A black lion sprang forth, smote once with its paw, and destroyed his (bodily) image

It tore up his skull his brain was scattered on the spot—the 460
brain (kernel) of a nut, for in him was no brain

If he had had a brain, his being broken to pieces would have been no injury at all except to his body

Jesus said (to the lion), "How did you maul him so quickly?" The lion said, "Because thou wert troubled by him"

Jesus asked, "How did not you drink the man's blood?" "In the (Divine) dispensation 'twas not granted to me to drink (it)," replied the lion

Oh, many a one that like that raging lion has departed from the world without having eaten his prey!

His (ordained) portion is not (even) a straw, while his greed 465
is as (great as) a mountain, he hath no means (of satisfying his desires), though he has gotten the (material) means

O Thou who hast made it easy for us to do unrewarded and fruitless labour in the world, deliver us!

To us it seems a (tempting) bait and 'tis (really) a hook show it to us even as it is

The lion said, "O Messiah, (my killing) this prey was merely for the purpose that warning might be taken (by others)

Had there (still) been for me in the world an allotted portion (of food), what business indeed should I have had with the dead?"[1]

470 This is the punishment deserved by him that finds pure water, and like an ass stales impertinently in the stream

If the ass know the value of that stream, instead of his foot he will put his head in it

He (the fool) finds a prophet like that, a lord of the (life-giving) Water, a cherisher of life

How does not he die before him, saying "O lord of the Water, make me living by the command 'Be'?"

Take heed! do not wish your currish (fleshly) soul alive, for it is the enemy of your spirit since long ago

475 Dust be on the head of the bones that hinder this cur from hunting the spirit[2]!

(If) you are not a cur, how are you in love with bones? Why are you in love with blood, like a leech?

What (sort of) eye is that that hath no sight, and gets nothing but disgrace from the tests (to which it is put)?

Opinions are sometimes erroneous, (but) what (sort of) opinion is this that is blind to the (right) road?

O eye, thou makest lament for others sit down awhile and weep for thyself!

480 The bough is made green and fresh by the weeping cloud, for the (same) reason that the candle is made brighter by (its) weeping

Wheresoever people are lamenting, sit you there (and lament), because you have a better right to moan (than they have),

Inasmuch as they are (concerned) with parting from that which passes away, and are forgetful of the ruby of everlastingness that belongs to the mine (of Reality),

Inasmuch as the stamp of blind imitation is (as) a lock upon the heart,—go, scrape off (dissolve) its lock with tears—,

Inasmuch as imitation is the bane of every good quality imitation is (but) a straw, (even) if it is a mighty mountain

485 If a blind man is big and choleric, deem him (only) a piece of flesh, since he has no eye (eye-sight)

Though he (the blind imitator) speak words finer than a hair, his heart has no knowledge of those words

[1] *I e* "how should I have died?"
[2] *I e* from seeking to become spiritualised

He has a certain intoxication from his own words, but there is a good way (distance) between him and the Wine

He is like a river-bed it does not drink any water, the water passes through it to the water-drinkers

The water does not settle in the river-bed because the river-bed is not thirsty and water-drinking

Like a reed-flute, he makes a piteous lament, but he (only) 490
seeks a purchaser (admirer)

The imitator in his discourse is (like) a professional mourner that wicked man has no motive except cupidity

The professional mourner utters burning words (of grief), but where is the glow of heart (heartfelt sorrow) and the rent skirt?

Between the true knower and the blind imitator there are (great) differences, for the former is like David, while the other is (but) an echo

The source of the former's words is a glow (of feeling), whereas the imitator is one who learns old things (by rote)

Beware! be not duped by those sorrowful words the ox 495
bears the load, but it is the cart that moans (creaks)[1]

Even the imitator is not disappointed of the (Divine) recompense the professional mourner gets his wages at the (time of) reckoning

(Both) infidel and true believer say "God," but there is a good difference between the two

The beggar says "God" for the sake of bread, the devout man says "God" from his very soul

If the beggar distinguished (God as He really is) from his own saying (the name of God), neither less nor more would remain before his eye[2]

For years that bread-seeker says "God", like the ass, he 500
carries the Qur'án for the sake of (being fed with) straw

Had the word on his lips shone forth in his heart, his body would have been shivered to atoms

In sorcery the name of a demon finds the way (to success), you are earning a petty coin by means of the Name of God

How a peasant stroked a lion in the dark, because he thought it was his ox

A peasant tied an ox in the stable a lion ate his ox and sat in its place

The peasant went into the stable to (see) the ox the man, groping into corners, was seeking the ox at night

He was rubbing his hand on the limbs of the lion, back and 505
side, now above, now below

[1] Literally "the load is on the ox and the moaning on the cart"
[2] *I e* he would lose all consciousness of self-interest

The lion said, "If the light were to become greater, his gall-bladder would burst and his heart would turn to blood

He is stroking me like this so boldly because in this (dark) night he thinks I am the ox"

God is saying, "O blind dupe, did not Tur (Sinai) fall in pieces at My Name?

For *if We had sent down* (revealed) a Book to the mountain, it would have been riven asunder, then cut to pieces, and then it would have departed (disappeared)

510 If Mount Uhud had been acquainted with Me, blood would have gushed in jets from the mountain"

You have heard this from your father and mother, in consequence you have embraced it thoughtlessly

If you become acquainted with Him without blind imitation, by (His) grace you will become immaterial[1], like a voice from Heaven

Hear this (following) story as a deterrent, in order that you may know the banefulness of blind imitation

How the Sufis sold the traveller's beast (to pay) for the (expenses of the) mystic dance

A Sufí, after journeying, arrived at a monastery (for Sufís), he took his mount and led it to the stable

515 With his own hand he gave it a little water and some fodder (he was) not such a Sufi as the one we told of before

He took precaution for it against neglect and craziness, (but) when the (Divine) destiny comes to pass, of what avail is precaution?

The Sufís were destitute and poor poverty almost comprises an infidelity that brings (the soul) to perdition

O thou rich man who art full fed, beware of laughing at the unrighteousness of the suffering poor

On account of their destitution that Súfí flock, all of them, adopted (the expedient of) selling the ass,

520 Saying, "(In case) of necessity a carcase is lawful (food), (there is) many a vicious act that necessity made a virtuous one"

They instantly sold the little ass, they fetched dainty viands and lit candles

Jubilation arose in the monastery (they cried), "To-night there are dainties and music and dancing and voracity

How much (more) of this (carrying the) wallet and this beggary? How much (more) of this patience and of this three-day fasting?

[1] Literally "without trace (of self-existence)"

We also are of (God's) creatures, we have soul Good luck (is ours) to-night we have the guest (to entertain)"

Thereby they were sowing the seed of falsehood, for they 525
deemed soul that which is not soul

And the traveller, too, was tired by the long journey and (gladly) saw that favour and fondness (with which they regarded him)

The Sufís, one by one, caressed him they were playing the game of (bestowing) pleasant attentions (on him)

When he saw their affection towards him, he said, "If I don't make merry to-night, when (shall I do so)?"

They ate the viands and began[1] the *samá'* (musical dance), the monastery was filled with smoke and dust up to the roof—

The smoke of the kitchen, the dust of (raised by) beating the 530
feet (dancing), the tumult of soul (caused) by longing and ecstasy

Now, waving their hands, they would beat (the ground with) their feet, now, in (religious) prostration, they would sweep the dais (with their foreheads)

(Only) after long (waiting) does the Súfí gain his desire (the satisfaction of his appetite) from Fortune for that reason the Súfí is a great eater,

Except, to be sure, the Súfí who has eaten his fill of the Light of God he is free from the shame of beggary,

(But) of these Sufis there are (only) a few among thousands, the rest are living in (under the protection of) his (the perfect Súfí's spiritual) empire

When the *samá'* had come (run its course) from beginning to 535
end, the minstrel struck up a heavy (deep-sounding) strain

He commenced (to sing), "The ass is gone, and the ass is gone", he made the whole (company) sharers in this enthusiasm

From this enthusiasm (they continued) beating their feet (dancing) till dawn, clapping their hands (and singing), "The ass is gone, the ass is gone, O son!"

By way of imitation that Súfí began (to sing) in (tones of) impassioned feeling this same (phrase), "The ass is gone"

When the pleasure and excitement and music and dancing were over, day dawned and they all said, "Farewell!"

The monastery was deserted, and the Súfí remained (alone) 540
that traveller set about shaking the dust from his baggage

He brought out the baggage from his cell, in order that he might tie it on the ass, (for he was) desirous of (finding) people to travel with

[1] This archaic construction (کرد = کردند) occurs several times in the *Mathnawí*

He was hurrying that he might overtake his fellow-travellers, he went into the stable but did not find the ass

He said, "The servant has taken it (the ass) to water, because it drank little water last night"

The servant came, and the Sufí said to him, "Where is the ass?" "Look at your beard,"[1] replied the servant, and a quarrel arose

545 He (the Sufí) said, "I have entrusted the ass to you, I have put you in charge of the ass

Discuss (the matter) with propriety, don't argue deliver back to me what I delivered to you

I demand from you what I gave to you return that which I sent to you

The Prophet said that whatever your hand has taken must in the end be restored (to its owner)

And if you, from insolence, are not content with this, look here, let us (go) to the house of the Cadi of (our) religion"

550 The servant said, "I was overpowered the Sufis rushed (on me), and I was in fear for my life

Do you throw a liver with the parts next it amongst cats, and (then) seek the trace of it?

One cake of bread amongst a hundred hungry people, one wasted (starved) cat before a hundred dogs?"

"I suppose," said the Sufi, "that they took it (the ass) from you by violence, (and thereby) aimed at the life of wretched me,

(And seeing this) you would not come and say to me, 'They are taking away your ass, O poor man!'

555 So that I might buy back the ass from (the purchaser) whoever he is, or else they might divide my money (amongst themselves and return the ass to me)

There were a hundred ways of mending (the injury) when they (the Sufis) were present, (but) now each one is gone to a (different) clime

Whom should I seize? Whom should I take to the Cadi? 'Tis from you in sooth that this judgement has come upon me

How wouldn't you come and say (to me), 'O stranger, such a terrible outrage has occurred'?"

"By God," said he, "I came several times to inform you of these doings,

560 (But) you were always saying, 'The ass is gone, O son,' with more gusto than all (the others) who said it

(So) I was (always) going back, (thinking), 'He himself is aware, he is satisfied with this (Divine) judgement he is a man that knows (God)'"

The Sufí said, "They all were saying (it) merrily, (so) I also took delight in saying it

[1] *I e* "recollect how old you are (and don't ask such a foolish question)"

Blind imitation of them has brought me to ruin two hundred curses be on that imitation!

Especially (on) imitation of such good-for-nothing rascals—the wrath of Abraham be on *them that sink*!

The delight of that company (of Súfís) was casting a re- 565
flexion, and this heart of mine was becoming delighted by that reflexion"

The reflexion (cast) from goodly friends is necessary until you become, without (the aid of any) reflexion, a drawer of water from the Sea

Know that the reflexion first cast is (only) imitation, (but) when it has become successive (continually recurrent) it turns into (direct) realisation (of the truth)

Until it has become realisation, do not part from the friends (by whom you are guided), do not break away from the shell the rain-drop has not (yet) become a pearl

If you wish eye and understanding and hearing to be pure, tear in pieces the curtains of selfish desire,

Because the Sufi's imitation, (which arose) from desire, 570
debarred his understanding from the light and radiance

Desire for the viands and desire for that delight (shown by the Sufis) and for the *sama'* hindered his understanding from (gaining) knowledge (of what had happened)

If desire were to arise in the mirror, that mirror would be like us in (respect of) hypocrisy

If the balance had desire for riches, how would the balance give a true description of the case?

Every prophet has said in sincerity to his people, "I ask not from you the wages for my message

I am (only) a guide, God is your purchaser God has appointed 575
me to act as broker on both sides

What are the wages for my work? The sight of the Friend (God), even though Abu Bakr give me forty thousand (dirhems)

My wages are not his forty thousand (dirhems) how should glass beads be like the pearls of Aden?"

I will tell you a story listen to it attentively, that you may know that selfish desire is a plug in the ear

Whosoever hath (such) desire becomes a stammerer (morally confused), with desire (present), how should the (spiritual) eye and the heart become bright?

The fancy of power and wealth before his eye is just as a hair 580
in the eye,

Except, to be sure, (in the case of) the intoxicated (saint) who is filled with God though you give (him) treasures (vast riches), he is free,

(For) when any one enjoys vision (of God), this world becomes carrion in his eyes

But that Sufí was far removed from (spiritual) intoxication, consequently he was night-blind (purblind) in (his) greed

The man dazed by greed may hear a hundred stories, (but) not a single point comes into the ear of greed

How the criers of the Cadi advertised an insolvent round the town

585 There was an insolvent person without house or home, who remained in prison and pitiless bondage

He would unconscionably eat the rations of the prisoners, on account of (his) appetite he was (a burden) like Mount Qáf on the hearts of the people (in the gaol)

No one had the pluck to eat a mouthful of bread, because that snatcher of portions would carry off his entire meal[1]

Any one who is far from the feast of the Merciful (God) has the eye of a (low) beggar, though he be a sultan

He (the insolvent) had trodden virtue underfoot, the prison had become a hell on account of that robber of bread

590 If you flee in hope of some relief, on that side also a calamity comes to meet you

No corner is without wild beasts, there is no rest but in the place where you are alone with God

The corner (narrow cell) of this world's inevitable prison is not exempt from the charges for visitors and (the cost of) house-warming

By God, if you go into a mouse-hole, you will be afflicted by some one who has the claws of a cat

Man has fatness from (thrives on) fancy, if his fancies are beautiful,

595 And if his fancies show anything unlovely he melts away as wax (is melted) by a fire

If amidst snakes and scorpions God keep you with the fancies of them that are (spiritually) fair,

The snakes and scorpions will be friendly to you, because that fancy is the elixir which transmutes your copper (into gold)

Patience is sweetened by fair fancy, since (in that case) the fancies of relief (from pain) have come before (the mind)

That relief comes into the heart from faith weakness of faith is despair and torment

600 Patience gains a crown from faith where one hath no patience, he hath no faith

The Prophet said, "God has not given faith to any one in whose nature there is no patience"

[1] Literally, "would carry off his ox' The greedy insolvent is compared to a lion

That same one (who) in your eyes is like a snake is a picture (of beauty) in the eyes of another,

Because in your eyes is the fancy of his being an infidel, while in the eyes of his friend is the fancy of his being a (true) believer,

For both the effects (belief and unbelief) exist in this one person now he is a fish and now a hook

Half of him is believer, half of him infidel, half of him 605
cupidity, half of him patience (and abstinence)

Your God has said, "(*Some*) *of you* (*are*) *believing*", (and) again, "(*Some*) *of you* (*are*) *unbelieving*" (as) an old fire-worshipper

(He is) like an ox, his left half black, the other half white as the moon

Whoever sees the former half spurns (him), whoever sees the latter half seeks (after him)

Joseph was like a beast of burden in the eyes of his brethren, at the same time in the eyes of a Jacob he was like a houri

Through evil fancy the (bodily) derivative eye and the original 610
unseen eye (of the mind) regarded him (Joseph) as ugly

Know that the outward eye is the shadow of that (inward) eye whatever that (inward) eye may see, this (outward) eye turns to that (eye)

You are of where[1], (but) your origin is in Nowhere[2] shut up this shop and open that shop

Do not flee to the (world of the) six directions, because in directions there is the *shashdara*[3], and the *shashdara* is mate, mate

How the prisoners laid a complaint of the insolvent's high-handedness before the agent of the Cadi

The prisoners came to complain to the Cadi's agent, (who was) possessed of discernment,

Saying, "Take now our salutations to the Cadi and relate 615
(to him) the sufferings inflicted on us by this vile man,

For he has remained in this prison continuously, and he is an idle gad-about, a lickspittle, and a nuisance

Like a fly, he impudently appears at every meal without invitation and without salaam

To him the food of sixty persons is nothing, he feigns himself deaf if you say to him, 'Enough!'

No morsel reaches the (ordinary) man in prison, or if by means of a hundred contrivances he discover some food,

That hell-throat at once comes forward (with) this (as) his 620
argument, that God has said, '*Eat ye*'

[1] Literally, "place"
[2] Literally, "not-place"
[3] A certain disastrous position in the game of *nard*

Justice, justice against such a three years' famine! May the shadow of our lord endure for ever!

Either let this buffalo go from prison, or make him a regular allowance of food from a trust-fund

O thou by whom both males and females are (made) happy, do justice! Thy help is invoked and besought'

The courteous agent went to the Cadi and related the complaint to him point by point

The Cadi called him (the insolvent) from the prison into his presence, and (then) inquired (about him) from his own officers

All the complaints which that flock (of prisoners) had set forth were proved to the Cadi

The Cadi said (to him), "Get up and depart from this prison go to the house which is your inherited property"

He replied, "My house and home consist in thy beneficence, as (in the case of) an infidel, thy prison is my Paradise

If thou wilt drive me from the prison and turn me out[1], verily I shall die of destitution and beggary"

(He pleaded) like the Devil, who was saying, "O Preserver, *O my Lord, grant me a respite till the day of Resurrection*,

For I am happy (to be) in the prison of this world, in order that I may be slaying the children of mine enemy,

(And), if any one have some food of faith and a single loaf as provision for the journey (to the life hereafter),

I may seize it, now by plot and now by guile, so that in repentance they may raise an outcry (of lamentation),

(And in order that) sometimes I may threaten them with poverty, sometimes bind their eyes with (the spell of) tress and mole"

In this prison (the world) the food of faith is scarce, and that which exists is in (danger of being caught in) the noose (of destruction) through the attack of this cur

(If) from prayer and fasting and a hundred helplessnesses (utter self-abnegations) the food of spiritual feeling come (to any one), he (the Devil) at once carries it off

I seek refuge with God from His Satan we have perished, alas, through his overweening disobedience

He is (but) one cur, and he goes into thousands (of people) into whomsoever he goes, he (that person) becomes he (Satan)

Whoever makes you cold (damps your spiritual ardour) know that he (Satan) is in him the Devil has become hidden beneath his skin

When he finds no (bodily) form, he comes into (your) fancy, in order that that fancy may lead you into woe

Now the fancy of recreation, now of the shop, now the fancy of knowledge, and now of house and home

[1] Literally, "drive me with repulsion"

Beware! say at once "God help me!" again and again[1], not with tongue alone but from your very soul

The Cadi said, "Show plainly that you are insolvent " "Here are the prisoners," he replied, "as thy witnesses "

"They," said the Cadi, "are suspect, because they are fleeing from you and weeping blood (on account of your ill-treatment of them),

Also, they are suing to be delivered from you by reason of this self-interest the testimony they give is worthless "

All the people belonging to the court of justice said, "We bear witness both to his insolvency and to his (moral) degeneracy "

Every one whom the Cadi questioned about his condition said, "My lord, wash thy hands of this insolvent "

The Cadi said, "March him round the city for all to see, (and cry), 'This man is an insolvent and a great rogue '

Make proclamations concerning him, street by street, beat the drum (as an advertisement) of his insolvency everywhere in open view

Let no one sell to him on credit, let no one lend him a farthing

Whosoever may bring here a claim against him for fraud, I will not put him in prison any more

His insolvency has been proven to me he has nothing in his possession, (neither) money nor goods "

Man is in the prison of this world in order that peradventure his insolvency may be proven

Our God has also proclaimed in our Qur'an the insolvency of Iblís,

Saying, "He is a swindler and insolvent and liar[2] do not make any partnership or (play any) game with him "

And if you do so (and) bring (vain) pretexts to him[3], he is insolvent how will you get profit from him?

When the trouble started[4], they brought on the scene the camel of a Kurd who sold firewood

The helpless Kurd made a great outcry, he also gladdened the officer (appointed to seize the camel) with (the gift of) a *dáng*,

(But) they took away his camel from the time of forenoon until nightfall, and his lamentation was of no use

Upon the camel sat that sore famine (the insolvent), while the owner of the camel was running at its heels

[1] Literally, "say many times (the litany which begins with the words) *Lá hawl* "

[2] Literally, "one whose words are evil "

[3] *I e* 'if you become his partner and then plead with him to save you from the consequences of your folly "

[4] Literally, "was kindled " The "trouble ' refers to the business of parading the insolvent

They sped from quarter to quarter and from street to street, till the whole town knew him by sight

Before every bath and market-place all the people gazed on his (features and) figure

(There were) ten loud-voiced criers, Turks and Kurds and Anatolians and Arabs, (proclaiming),

"This man is insolvent and has nothing let no one lend him a single brass farthing,

665 He does not possess a single mite, patent or latent he is a bankrupt, a piece of falsehood[1], a cunning knave, an oil-bag[2]

Beware and beware! Have no dealings with him, when he brings the ox (to sell), make fast the knot

And if ye bring this decayed fellow to judgement, I will not put a corpse in prison

He is fair-spoken and his throat is very wide[3], (he is clad) with a new inner garment (of plausibility) and a tattered outer garment

If he puts on that (inner) garment for the purpose of deceiving, it is borrowed in order that he may beguile the common folk"

670 Know, O simple man, that words of wisdom on the tongue of the unwise are (as) borrowed robes

Although a thief has put on a (fine) robe, how should he whose hand is cut off[4] take your hand (lend you a helping hand)?

When at nightfall he (the insolvent) came down from the camel, the Kurd said to him, "My abode is far (from here) and a long way off

You have ridden on my camel since early morning I (will) let the barley go, (but I will not take) less than the cost of (some) straw"

"Why, then," he rejoined, "have we been going round (the city) until now? Where are your wits? Is nobody at home?

675 The (sound of the) drum (giving notice) of my insolvency reached the Seventh Heaven, and you have not heard the bad news!

Your ear has been filled with foolish hope, (such) hope, then, makes (one) deaf (and) blind, my lad"

Even clods and stones heard this advertisement—"he is insolvent, he is insolvent, this scoundrel"

They (the criers) said it till nightfall, and it made no impression on the owner of the camel, because he was full of (idle) hope, full

God's seal lies upon the hearing and sight within the veils is many a form and many a sound

[1] Literally, "false coin"
[2] *I e* smooth-tongued and deceitful, "a windbag"
[3] *I e* he pours forth fine words in abundance
[4] The usual penalty for theft

He communicates to the eye that which He wills of beauty 680
and of perfection and of amorous looks,

And He communicates to the ear that which He wills of music and glad tidings and cries (of rapture)

The world is full of remedies, but you have no remedy till God opens a window for you

Though you are unaware of that (remedy) just now, God will make it plain in the hour of need

The Prophet said that the glorious God has created a remedy for every pain,

But of that remedy for your pain you will not see (even) the 685
colour or scent without His command

Come, O you that seek the remedy, set your eye on non-spatiality[1], as the eye of one (about to be) killed (turns) towards the spirit

This (spatial) world has been produced from that which is without spatial relations, for the world has received (the relation of) place[2] from placelessness

Turn back from existence towards non-existence, (if) you seek the Lord and belong to the Lord

This non-existence is the place of income do not flee from it, this existence of more and less is the place of expenditure

Since God's workshop is non-existence, outside of the work- 690
shop there is (only) worthlessness

Put into our heart subtle words which may move Thee to mercy, O Gracious One!

From Thee (come) both the prayer and the answer, from Thee safety, from Thee also dread

If we have spoken faultily, do Thou correct it Thou art the Corrector, O Thou (who art the) Sultan of speech

Thou hast the alchemy whereby Thou mayst transmute it, and though it be a river of blood, mayst make it a Nile

Such alchemical operations are Thy work, such elixirs are Thy 695
secrets

Thou didst beat water and earth together from water and clay Thou didst mould the body of Adam

Thou gavest him (Man) lineage and wife and uncles, maternal and paternal, with a thousand thoughts and joys and griefs

Again, to some Thou hast given deliverance Thou hast parted them from this grief and joy,

Thou hast borne them away from kindred and relatives and (their own) nature, Thou hast made every fair thing foul in his (such a one's) eyes

He spurns all that is perceived by the senses, and leans for 700
support on that which is invisible

[1] *I e* the Divine consciousness which transcends space

[2] Literally, "has become place"

His love is manifest and his Beloved is hidden the Friend is outside (of the world), (but) His fascination is in the world

Give up this (belief)[1] Loves (felt) for what is endued with form have not as their object the (outward) form or the lady's face

That which is the object of love is not the form, whether it be love for (the things of) this world or yonder world

That which you have come to love for its form—why have you abandoned it after the spirit has fled?

705 Its form is still there whence (then) this satiety (disgust)? O lover, inquire who your beloved (really) is

If the beloved is that which the senses perceive, every one that has senses would be in love (with it)

Inasmuch as constancy is increased by that (spiritual) love, how is constancy altered (impaired) by the (decay of the material) form?

The sunbeam shone upon the wall the wall received a borrowed splendour

Why set your heart on a piece of turf, O simple man? Seek out the source which shines perpetually

710 You who are in love with your intellect, deeming yourself superior to worshippers of form,

That (intellect) is a beam of (Universal) Intellect (cast) on your sense-perception, regard it as borrowed gold on your copper

Beauty in humankind is like gilding, else, how did your sweetheart become (as ugly as) an old ass?

She was like an angel, she became like a demon, for that loveliness in her was a borrowed (transient) thing

Little by little He (God) takes away that beauty little by little the sapling withers

715 Go, recite (the text) *to whomso We grant length of days, him We cause to decline* Seek the heart (spirit), set not thy heart on bones,

For that beauty of the heart is the lasting beauty its lips give to drink of the Water of Life

Truly it is both the water and the giver of drink and the drunken all three become one when your talisman is shattered

That oneness you cannot know by reasoning Do service (to God) and refrain from foolish gabble, O undiscerning man!

Your reality is the form and that which is borrowed you rejoice in what is relative and (secondary like) rhyme

720 Reality is that which seizes (enraptures) you and makes you independent of form

Reality is not that which makes blind and deaf and causes a man to be more in love with form

The portion of the blind is the fancy that increases pain, the

[1] *I e* the belief in phenomena

share of the (spiritual) eye is these fancies (ideas) of dying to
self (*faná*)

The blind are a mine (full) of the letter of the Qur'án they
do not see the ass, and (only) cling to the pack-saddle

Since you have sight, go after the ass which has jumped (away
from you) how long (will you persist in) stitching the saddle,
O saddle-worshipper?

When the ass is there, the saddle will certainly be yours bread 725
does not fail when you have the (vital) spirit

(On) the back of the ass is shop and wealth and gain, the pearl
of your heart is the stock (which provides wealth) for a hundred
bodies

Mount the ass bare-backed, O busybody did not the Prophet
ride the ass bare-backed?

The Prophet rode (his beast) bare-backed, and the Prophet,
it is said, journeyed on foot

The ass, your fleshly soul, has gone off, tie it to a peg How
long will it run away from work and burden, how long?

It must bear the burden of patience and thanksgiving, whether 730
for a hundred years or for thirty or twenty

None that is laden supported another's load, none reaped
until he sowed something

'Tis a raw (absurd) hope, eat not what is raw, O son eating
raw brings illness to men

(Do not say to yourself), "So-and-so suddenly found a trea-
sure, I would like the same neither work nor shop (for me)!"

That (discovery of treasure) is Fortune's doing (a piece of
luck), and moreover it is rare one must earn a living so long as
the body is able

How does earning a livelihood prevent the (discovery of) 735
treasure? Do not retire from work that (treasure), indeed, is
(following) behind (the work)

See that you are not made captive by "if," saying, "If I had
done this or the other (thing),"

For the sincere Prophet forbade (people) to say "if," and
said, "That is from hypocrisy",

For the hypocrite died in saying "if," and from saying "if"
he won nothing but remorse

Parable

A certain stranger was hastily seeking a house a friend took
him to a house in ruins

He said (to the stranger), "If this (house) had a roof, it would 740
be a home for you beside me

Your family too would be comfortable, if it had another room
in it"

"Yes," said he, "it is nice (to be) beside friends, but my dear soul, one cannot lodge in 'if'"

All the world are seekers of happiness, and on account of a false happiness they are in the fire

Old and young[1] have become gold-seekers, but the common eye does not distinguish alloy from gold

745 The pure (gold) shot a beam on the alloy see that you choose not the gold on the ground of (mere) opinion, without a touchstone

If you have a touchstone, choose, otherwise, go, devote yourself to[2] him that knows (the difference)

Either you must have a touchstone within your own soul, or if you know not the Way, do not go forward alone

The cry of the ghouls is the cry of an acquaintance—an acquaintance who would lure you to perdition

She (the ghoul) keeps on crying, "Hark, O caravan people! Come towards me, here is the track and the landmarks"

750 The ghoul mentions the name of each, saying "O so-and-so," in order that she may make that personage one of those who sink

When he reaches the spot, he sees wolves and lions, his life lost, the road far off, and the day late

Prithee say, what is the ghoul's cry like? (It is) "I desire riches, I desire position and renown"

Prevent these voices from (entering) your heart, so that (spiritual) mysteries may be revealed

Repeat (in prayer) the name of God, drown[3] the cry of the ghouls, close your narcissus-eye to this vulture

755 Know the difference between the false dawn and the true, distinguish the colour of the wine from the colour of the cup,

That, perchance, from the eyes which see the seven colours patience and waiting may produce a (spiritual) eye,

(With which) you may behold colours other than these, and may behold pearls instead of stones

What pearl? Nay, you will become an ocean, you will become a sun traversing the sky

The Worker is hidden in the workshop go you and in the workshop see Him plain

760 Inasmuch as the work has woven a veil over the Worker, you cannot see Him outside of that work

Since the workshop is the dwelling-place of the Worker, he that is outside is unaware of Him

Come, then, into the workshop, that is to say, non-existence, that you may see the work and the Worker together

As the workshop is the place of clairvoyance, then outside of the workshop there is (only) blindfoldness

[1] Literally, "raw"

[2] Literally, "put yourself in pawn to"

[3] Literally, "burn"

The rebellious Pharaoh kept his face towards existence, consequently he was blind to His (God's) workshop

Consequently he was wishing to alter the (Divine) pre- 765
destination, that he might turn back the (Divine) destiny from his door

Truly the (Divine) destiny every moment was laughing derisively under its lip at the moustache (arrogance) of that cunning plotter

He killed hundreds of thousands of innocent babes, in order that the ordainment and predestination of God might be averted

In order that the prophet Moses might not come forth, he laid on his neck (made himself responsible for) thousands of iniquities and murders

He wrought all that bloodshed, and (yet) Moses was born and was made ready for his chastisement

Had he seen the workshop of the Everlasting (God), he would 770
have ceased to move hand or foot[1] in plotting

Moses (lay) safe[2] within his (Pharaoh's) house, while outside he was killing the infants in vain,

Even as the sensual man who pampers his body and suspects some one else of a bitter hatred (against him),

Saying, "This one is a foe, and that one is envious and an enemy," (though) in truth his envier and enemy is that body (of his)

He is like Pharaoh, and his body is his Moses he keeps running (to and fro) outside, asking, "Where is my enemy?"

His fleshly soul (is) luxuriating in the house, which is his body, 775
(while) he gnaws his hand in rancour against some one else

How men blamed a person who killed his mother because he suspected her (of adultery)

A certain man killed his mother in wrath, with blows of a dagger and also with blows of his fist

Some one said to him, "From evil nature you have not borne in mind what is due to motherhood

Hey, tell (me) why you killed your mother What did she do? Pray, tell (me), O foul villain!"[3]

He said, "She did a deed that is a disgrace to her, I killed her because that earth (her grave) is her coverer (hides her shame)"

The other said, "O honoured sir, kill that one (who was her 780
partner in guilt)" "Then," he replied, "I should kill a man every day

[1] Literally, "his hand and foot would have become dry (paralysed)"
[2] Literally, "preserved from harm (by God)"
[3] Literally, "O man of wicked disposition"

I killed her, I was saved from shedding the blood of a multitude 'tis better that I cut her throat than the throats of (so many) people "

That mother of bad character, whose wickedness is in every quarter, is your fleshly soul

Come, kill it, for on account of that vile (creature) you are every moment assailing one who is venerable

Through it this fair world is narrow (distressful) to you, for its sake (you are at) war with God and man

785 (If) you have killed the fleshly soul, you are delivered from (the necessity of) excusing yourself nobody in the world remains your enemy

If any one should raise a difficulty about my words in regard to[1] the prophets and saints,

(And should say), "Had not the prophets a killed (mortified) fleshly soul? Why, then, had they enemies and enviers?"—

Give ear, O seeker of truth, and hear the answer to this difficulty (born) of doubt

Those unbelievers were (really) enemies to themselves they were striking at themselves such blows (as they struck)

790 An enemy is one who attempts (another's) life, he that is himself destroying his own life is not an enemy (to others)

The little bat is not an enemy to the sun it is an enemy to itself in the veil (of its own blindness)

The glow of the sun kills it, how should the sun ever suffer annoyance from it?

An enemy is one from whom torment proceeds, (one who) hinders the ruby from (receiving the rays of) the sun

All the infidels hinder themselves from (receiving) the rays of the prophets' (spiritual) jewel

795 How should (unbelieving) people veil the eyes of that peerless one (the prophet or saint)? The people have (only) blinded and distorted their own eyes

(They are) like the Indian slave who bears a grudge and kills himself to spite his master

He falls headlong from the roof of the house (in the hope) that he may have done some harm to his master

If the sick man become an enemy to the physician, or if the boy show hostility to the teacher,

In truth they act as brigands against themselves they themselves waylay their own mind and spirit

800 If a fuller take offence at the sun, if a fish is taking offence at the water,

Just once consider whom that (anger) injures, and whose star is eclipsed[2] by it in the end

[1] *I e* "As regards their being applicable to "
[2] Literally, "who is black-starred "

If God create you with ugly features, take care lest you become both ugly-featured and ugly-natured,

And if your shoes are ripped, do not go into stony ground, and if you have two spikes, don't become four-spiked[1]

You are envious, saying, "I am inferior to so-and-so he (by his superior position) is increasing my inferiority in fortune"

(But) indeed envy is another defect and fault, nay, it is worse than all inferiorities

That Devil (Satan), through the shame and disgrace of inferiority (to Adam), cast himself into a hundred damnations[2]

Because of envy, he wished to be at the top At the top, forsooth! Nay, (he wished) to be a blood-shedder

Abú Jahl was put to shame by Mohammed, and because of envy was raising himself to the top

His name was Abu 'l-Hakam, and he became Abu Jahl[3] oh, many a worthy has become unworthy because of envy

I have not seen in the world of search and seeking (trial and probation) any worthiness better than a good disposition

God made the prophets the medium (between Him and His creatures) in order that feelings of envy should be displayed in the agitation (produced by something that rankles in the mind)

Inasmuch as no one was disgraced by (inferiority to) God, no one was (ever) envious of God,

(But) the person whom he deemed like himself—he would bear envy against *him* for that reason

(Now), as the grandeur of the Prophet has become established, none feels envy (of him), since he is accepted (by all the Faithful),

Therefore in every epoch (after Mohammed) a saint arises (to act as his vicegerent) the probation (of the people) lasts until the Resurrection

Whosoever has a good disposition is saved, whosoever is of frail heart[4] is broken

That saint, then, is the living Imám who arises (in every age), whether he be a descendant of 'Umar or of 'Alí

He is the *Mahdí* (the God-guided one) and the *Hádí* (the Guide), O seeker of the (right) way he is both hidden (from you) and seated before your face

He is as the Light (of Mohammed), and (Universal) Reason is his Gabriel, the saint that is lesser than he is his lamp (and receives illumination from him)

[1] *I e* "if you are being tortured with a two-spiked collar, do not put on one with four spikes"

[2] Literally, "deprivation (of spiritual blessings)"

[3] Abu 'l-Hakam means "Father of the (wise) judge" The nickname, Abu Jahl, means "Father of ignorance"

[4] Literally, "glass-hearted," *i e* weak and vicious

820 That (saint) who is lesser than this lamp is our lamp-niche the Light has gradations in degree,

Because the Light of God has seven hundred veils regard the veils of the Light as so many tiers

Behind each veil a certain class (of saints) has its place of abode these veils of theirs are (in ascending order), rank by rank, up to the Imám

Those in the last (lowest) rank, through their weakness, (are such that) their eyes cannot endure the light in front (of them),

And that front rank, from weakness of sight, cannot support the light that is more advanced

825 The light that is the life of the first (highest rank) is heartache and tribulation to this squinter,

(But) the squintnesses, little by little, grow less, and when he passes beyond the seven hundred (veils), he becomes the Sea

The fire that does good to iron or gold—how is it good for fresh quinces and apples?

The apple and quince have (only) a slight crudity unlike iron, they want a gentle heat,

But those flames are (too) gentle for the iron, for it is (eagerly) drawing to (itself) the heat of that (fiery) dragon

830 That iron is the dervish who bears hardship (self-mortification) under the hammer and the fire he is red and happy

He is the chamberlain of the fire (and) in immediate touch (with it) he goes into the heart of the fire without (any) link (between the fire and him)

Without some screen, water and water's children get no cooking or conversation from the fire

The medium is a pot or a pan—as (the medium) for the foot in walking (is) a sock (shoe)—

Or a space between, so that the air becomes burning hot and brings (the fire) to the water

835 The dervish, then, is he that has no intermediary the flames have (direct) connexion with his being

Therefore he is the heart of the world, because by means of this heart the body attains to (its proper) art (function)

(If) the heart be not there, how can the body talk and speak? (If) the heart seek not, how can the body seek and search?

Therefore the theatre of the (Divine) rays is that iron, therefore the theatre of God is the heart, not the body

Again, these partial (individual) hearts are as the body in relation to the heart of the man of heart (the perfect saint), which is the original source

840 This argument wants much illustration and exposition, but I fear lest the opinion of the vulgar should stumble (and fall into error),

(And) lest my goodness should be turned (by them) to badness,—even this that I have spoken was (from) naught but selflessness[1]

The crooked shoe is better for the crooked foot, the beggar's power reaches only as far as the door[2]

How the King made trial of the two slaves whom he had recently purchased

A King bought two slaves cheap, and conversed with one of the twain

He found him quick-witted and answering sweetly what issues from the sugar-lip? Sugar-water

Man is concealed underneath his tongue this tongue is the curtain over the gate of the soul

When a gust of wind has rolled up the curtain, the secret of the interior of the house is disclosed to us,

(And we see) whether in that house there are pearls or (grains of) wheat, a treasure of gold or whether all is snakes and scorpions,

Or whether a treasure is there and a serpent beside it, since a treasure of gold is not without some one to keep watch

Without premeditation he (that slave) would speak in such wise as others after five hundred premeditations

You would have said that in his inward part there was a sea, and that the whole sea was pearls of eloquence,

(And that) the light that shone from every pearl became a criterion for distinguishing between truth and falsehood

(So) would the light of the Criterion (Universal Reason), (if it shone into our hearts), distinguish for us truth and falsehood and separate them mote by mote,

The light of the (Divine) Pearl would become the light of our eyes both the question and the answer would be (would come) from us

(But) you have made your eyes awry and seen the moon's disk double this gazing in perplexity is like the question

Make your eyes straight in the moonshine, so that you may see the moon as one Lo, (that is) the answer

Tell your thought not to see awry and to look well (rightly) that thought is the radiance of that Pearl

Whenever an answer comes to the heart through the ear, the eye says, "Hear it from me, let that (answer given through the ear) alone!"

The ear is a go-between, while the eye is possessed of union

[1] I e spoken under the influence of ecstasy

[2] Literally, "the beggar has power over the door (only)," i e he cannot penetrate to the interior of the house

(immediate vision), the eye has direct experience (of reality), while the ear has (only) words (doctrine)

In the ear's hearing there is a transformation of qualities, in the eyes' seeing there is a transformation of essence

860 If your knowledge of fire has been turned to certainty by words (alone), seek to be cooked (by the fire itself), and do not abide in the certainty (of knowledge derived from others)

There is no intuitive (actual) certainty until you burn, (if) you desire this certainty, sit down in the fire

When the ear is penetrating, it becomes an eye, otherwise, the word (of God) becomes entangled in the ear (and does not reach the heart)

This discourse hath no end Turn back, that (we may see) what the King did to those slaves of his

How the King sent away one of the two slaves and interrogated the other

When he saw that that laddie[1] was possessed of keen intelligence, he made a sign to the other to come (to him)

865 (If) I have called him by (a word which has) the suffix of pity (tenderness)[2], 'tis not to belittle him if a grandfather say "my sonny," it is not (in) contempt

When the second (slave) came before the King, he had a stinking mouth and black teeth

Although the King was displeased by his speech[3], still he made some inquiry concerning his hidden thoughts

He said, "With this aspect and this stinking mouth, sit at a distance, but do not move too far off[4]—

For (hitherto) you have been (with regard to me in the position of) a writer of letters and notes, you have not been a companion and friend and comrade—

870 That we may treat (and cure) that mouth of yours you are (now) the beloved (patient), and we are the skilful physician

'Tis not fitting to burn a new blanket on account of one flea, (nor would it become me) to shut my eyes to (turn my back on) you (because of superficial faults)

Notwithstanding all (this), sit down and talk on a few topics[5], that I may well see the form of your mind"

Then he sent that keen-witted one away to do (his behest) (he sent him) to a bath-house, saying, "Go, scrub yourself"

[1] Literally "little slave (*ghulámak*)

[2] Literally, "the *káf* of pity" *i e* the diminutive suffix *ak*, used to express affection

[3] *I e* because of his foul breath

[4] Literally, more to that side"

[5] Literally, 'tell two or three stories '

And to this other one he said, "Good! you are a clever lad in truth you are a hundred slaves, not one

You are not such as your fellow-servant declared that envious one would (fain) have made me cold to (disgusted with) you,

(For) he said that you are[1] thievish and dishonest and ill-behaved, immoral and infamous and so forth "

The slave said, "He (my fellow-servant) has always been veracious, I have not seen any one so truthful as he is

Veracity is inborn in his nature, whatever he says, I do not say it is void (of truth)

I deem not that good-minded one malicious I (rather) suspect my own person

Maybe, he sees in me faults I do not see in myself, O King "

Any one who saw his own faults before (seeing those of others) —how indeed should he be unconcerned with correcting himself?

These people (of the world) take no heed of themselves, O father consequently they blame one another

O idolater (dualist), (if) I do not behold my own face (reality), I behold thy face and thou beholdest mine

He that beholds his own face (reality)—his light is greater than the light of the creatures (of God)

Though he die, his sight is everlasting, because his sight is the sight of the Creator

That light by which he sensibly beholds his own face (reality) before him, is not the light of sense

The King said, "Now tell his (your fellow-servant's) faults, just as he spoke of yours,

That I may know whether you are solicitous for me and a (good) house-steward of my property and business "

He replied, "O King, I will tell his faults, though he is to me a pleasing fellow-servant

His faults are affection and loyalty and humanity, his faults are sincerity and keen-wittedness and cordial comradeship

His least fault is generosity and bounty—the generosity that even gives up life "

God has brought to view myriads of lives (in return for the life given up) what generosity would there be (in him) that saw not those?

And if he saw them, how should he grudge his life? How should he become so grieved for the sake of one life?

On the river-bank, water is grudged by him (alone) that is blind to the stream of water

The Prophet said, "Whosoever knows for sure his recompense on the day of Resurrection—

That his compensation will be ten for one—at every moment a different (act of) munificence will issue from him "

[1] Literally, "he is "

All munificence is from seeing compensations, therefore seeing the compensation is opposed to fearing (and shrinking from the act of munificence)

Miserliness consists in not seeing compensations the prospect of pearls keeps the diver glad

Hence no one in the world is miserly, since no one hazards anything without (seeing) what is to be received in exchange

900 Generosity, then, comes from the eye, not from the hand 'tis seeing that matters, none but the seer is saved

"Another fault (of his is) that he is not self-conceited, he is anxious to find fault with his self-existence

He has (always) been one who speaks in blame of himself and seeks to blame himself, he has (always) been good (kind) to all and bad (unkind) to himself"

The King said, "Do not show (such) eagerness in praising your friend, do not introduce praise of yourself in the mask of (your) praise of him,

Because I will bring him to the test, and shame will befall you in the upshot"

How the slave, from the purity of his thought, swore to the truth and loyalty of his friend

905 He said, "Nay, by Allah, and by the great God, the possessor of kingdom, and by the Merciful and Compassionate One,

By the God who sent the prophets, not in (His) need (of them), but in grace and majesty,

By the Lord who from the lowly earth created (those) glorious princely riders[1],

(And) purified them from the temperament of earthly beings, and caused them to outrun the celestials,

(By Him) who took up from the Fire and fashioned into pure Light—and then it outstripped all (the other) lights—

910 That splendour of lightning which shone over the spirits, so that Adam gained from that Light (his) knowledge (of God)

The hand of Seth gathered that which grew from Adam therefore Adam, when he saw that (Light in him), made him his vicar

Since Noah had enjoyment of that Jewel, he showered pearls (of Divine wisdom) in the air of the Sea of Soul

From (possession of) that mighty radiance the spirit of Abraham went fearlessly into the flames of the fire

When Ismá'íl (Ishmael) fell into the stream thereof, he laid his head before his (Abraham's) flashing knife

[1] I e riders of supreme dexterity

The soul of David was heated by its rays iron became soft in his hand-loom[1] 915

When Solomon was suckled on (the milk of) union with it, the demon became a thrall to his command and obedient

When Jacob bowed his head (in submission) to the (Divine) destiny, it (the Light) illumined (gladdened) his eye with the scent of his (lost) son

When the moon-faced Joseph beheld that Sun, he became so wide-awake (wise) in the interpretation of dreams

When the rod drank water (was imbued with the influence of the Light) from the hand of Moses, it made one mouthful of Pharaoh's empire

When Jesus, the son of Mary, found its ladder, he sped to the topmost height of the Fourth Dome (of Heaven) 920

When Mohammed gained that Kingdom and Felicity, he in a moment clave the disk of the moon in two halves

When Abu Bakr became a signal example of (God's) favour, he became the Companion of such a King (as Mohammed) and (received the name) *Siddíq*[2]

When 'Umar became distraught with that Beloved, he became a *Fáruq* (discerner)[3], like the heart, between truth and falsehood

When 'Uthmán became the fountain of that clear (Essence), he was light overflowing and became *Dhu 'l-Núrayn* (Lord of the Two Lights)[4]

When at (the sight of) its countenance Murtazá ('Alí) began to scatter pearls (of spiritual truth), he became the Lion of God in the pasture of the soul 925

When Junayd received that support (which he received) from its army, his *maqámát* (stages of progress in the mystical life) became innumerable

Báyazíd saw the way into its superabundance, and heard from God (heard God bestow upon him) the name, "Pole of the Gnostics"

When Karkhí became the guard of its city, he became the vicar of (Divine) love and inspired by the Divine breath

The son of Adham joyously rode his steed towards it, and became the supreme sovereign of justice

And that (famous) Shaqíq by cleaving (traversing) that venerable Way became a sun of (clear) judgement and keen-sighted 930

Hundreds of thousands of hidden (spiritual) kings are holding their heads high (in the region) beyond this world,

[1] For *dastbáf* cf i 492 and ii 2651, and for the metaphor Ka'b b Zuhayr in Nöldeke's *Delectus*, p 144, v 55 God taught David the art of making coats of mail (Qur'án, xxi, 80)

[2] *I e* "exceedingly veracious"

[3] Fárúq was a title given to 'Umar

[4] He was so named because he had married two daughters of the Prophet

Because of God's jealousy their names remained hidden every beggar did not pronounce their names

By the truth of that Light and by the truth of those illumined ones who are as fishes in that Sea—

'Tis not fitting if I call it the Sea of the Soul and the Soul of the Sea I am seeking a new name for it,—

935 By the truth of that That from which this and that are (derived), and in relation to which (all) kernels are as rinds,

(I swear) that the (good) qualities of my fellow-servant and friend exceed my description (of them) a hundredfold

That which I know of the (spiritual) endowments of that comrade (of mine) would not be believed by thee what shall I say, O noble (king)?"

The King said, "Now speak of your own (case), how long will you speak of what concerns this or that one?

What do you possess and what have you gained? What pearls have you fetched from the bottom of the Sea?

940 On the day of death this sense-perception of yours will vanish have you the spiritual light that should be the companion of your heart?

When dust shall fill these eyes in the tomb, have you that which will make the grave bright?

At the time when your hands and feet shall be torn in shreds, have you wings and plumes that your spirit may fly aloft?

At the time when this animal soul is no more, it behoves you to set the everlasting spirit in its place

The stipulation of (implied in) *he that comes with good* (*shall be rewarded tenfold*) does not consist in doing (good), it consists in bringing this good to the presence of God

945 You have a substance (essence) human or asinine (bestial) (bring that to God) how can you bring (to Him) these accidents (of word or deed) which have passed away?

As regards these accidents of prayer and fasting—since (that which) does not endure for two moments becomes naught—

'Tis impossible to carry over the accidents (into another state), but they (may) take away diseases (defects) from the substance,

So that the substance becomes changed by means of this accident, as when disease is removed by abstinence

By exertion abstinence, (which is) the accident, becomes the substance through abstinence the acrid mouth becomes (sweet as) honey

950 Land, through sowing, is turned into ears of corn, remedies for the hair turn the hair into chains (make it long and curly)

Conjugal intercourse was the accident, it passed away, and the substance, (which is) the child, was produced from us

The mating of horse or camel is the accident, the object is the birth of the colt, (which is) the substance

Similarly, the planting of the garden is the accident, the produce of the garden became the substance—behold the object (for which the garden was planted)!

Regard, also, the practice of alchemy as the accident, if a substance is produced by that alchemy, bring (it into view)

Burnishing is the accident, O prince, from this accident is 955
born the substance, purity

Do not say, then, 'I have done deeds', show the income (fruit) of those accidents, do not evade (my request)

This attribution of qualities is (only) an accident Be silent do not kill for sacrifice the goat's shadow!"

The slave said, "O King, the mind cannot but despair[1] if you say that accidents are not carried over

O King, there is nothing but despair for the servant (of God), if the accident that has gone is not coming back

If there were no carrying over and resurrection of accidents, 960
action would be vain and words (mere) babble

These accidents are carried over in another guise the resurrection of everything mortal is another (mode of) existence

The carrying over of everything is just as befits it[2] what befits the herd is its drover

At the time of the Resurrection every accident has a (particular) form, and the form of every accident has a turn (of appearing before God)

Look on thyself Wert not thou an accident—the movement of copulation, and copulation with a purpose?

Look on houses and edifices they were as tales in the (mind 965
of) the architect

Such-and-such a house, which seemed to us beautiful, of which the hall, roof, and door were well-proportioned—

('Twas) the accident (design) and ideas (proceeding) from the architect (that) brought the tools and pillars (into existence) from (their respective) handicrafts

What but some fancy and accident and idea is the origin and source of every handicraft?

Look disinterestedly on all the (various) parts of the world they are not the result of (anything) except accident

The beginning, which is thought, comes to an end in action, 970
know that in such wise was the construction of the world in eternity

The fruits are first in the mind's thought, (but only) at the last do they become manifest actually

When you have done work (and) planted the tree—at the end (when the fruit appears) you read the first words

[1] Literally, "it is not without despair of the understanding"

[2] *I e* everything is carried over into the form of existence that is suitable to its nature

Although its boughs, leaves, and roots are first, (yet) all those are sent for the sake of the fruit

Hence that hidden Thought which was the brain (core) of those (nine) heavens was in the end the lord of *lawlák*[1]

975 This discussion and talk are (involve) the carrying over of accidents, this lion and jackal are (examples of) the carrying over of accidents

Indeed, all created beings were accidents (once), so that in this sense (the text) was revealed—*Did there not come* ?

Whence arise those accidents? From ideas And whence arise these ideas? From thoughts

This world is one thought (emanating) from the Universal Intellect the Intellect is like a king, and the ideas (are his) envoys

The first world is the world of probation, the second world is the (world of) recompense for this and that

980 Thy servant, O King, commits a sin that accident becomes (a substance, namely) chains and prison

When thy slave performed goodly service, did not that accident become a robe of honour in the battle (between the flesh and the spirit)?

This accident with the substance (belonging to it) is egg and bird this is produced by that, and that by this, in succession "

The King said, "Take the meaning (to be) so (why then) have these accidents of yours not produced any substance?"

"(Divine) Wisdom," replied the slave, "has kept it concealed, in order that this world of good and evil may be a mystery,

985 Because, if the (substantial) forms of thought were to become manifest, infidel and believer (alike) would speak naught but praise (of God)

Then, were this clearly seen, O King, not hidden, and were the mark of religion or infidelity (visible) on the forehead,

How would there be idol and idolater in this world? How would any one have the stomach[2] to mock (at holy things)?

Then this world of ours would be (like) the Resurrection who commits sin and wrong at the Resurrection?"

The King said, "God has veiled the retribution of evil, but (only) from the vulgar, not from His own elect

990 If I entrap one Amír, I keep it hidden from the (other) Amírs, (but) not from the Vizier

God, then, has shown to me the retribution of work and myriads of the (substantial) forms of actions

[1] *I e* the Prophet Mohammed regarded as the final cause of the Creation *Lawlák* ('but for thee") refers to God's words, "But for thee I should not have created the heavens "

[2] Literally, "gall-bladder "

Give a sign (outwardly), for I know all the cloud does not veil the moon from me "

The slave said, "Then what is the object of my speaking, since thou knowest what is (the real nature of) that which has been?"

The King said, "The wisdom (of God) in making the world manifest (was) that the (thing) known should come forth (to be seen) plainly

Until He made visible that which He knew, He did not lay upon the world the pain of parturition and the throes (thereof)

You cannot sit inactive for one moment (you cannot rest) till some badness or goodness has issued from you

These demands (cravings) for action were appointed in order that your inward consciousness should come clearly into (outward) view

How, then, should the reel, which is the body, become still, when the thread's end, which is the mind, is pulling it?

The sign of that pulling is your anguish to be inactive is to you like the death-agony

This world and that world are for ever giving birth every cause is a mother, the effect is born (from it as) a child

When the effect was born, that too became a cause, so that it might give birth to wondrous effects

These causes are generation on generation, but it needs a very well illumined eye (to see all the links in their chain) "

The King, in conversation with him, arrived at this point, that he saw from him a sign (which was) not apparent

If that searching King saw (such a sign), 'tis not strange, but we are not permitted to mention it

When that (other) slave came from the warm bath, that King and lofty personage called him to his presence,

(And) said, "Health (to you)! Lasting happiness be yours![1] You are very fine and elegant and good-looking

Oh, alas! If there were not in you that which so-and-so says about you,

Whoever beheld your face would become glad, the sight of you would be worth the empire of the world "

He said, "O King, utter some hint of what that miscreant[2] said about me "

The King said, "In the first place he described you as double-faced, saying that you are ostensibly a remedy (but) secretly a disease "

When he heard from the King the malice of his companion, at once the sea of his anger surged up

That slave foamed and reddened, so that the billows of his vituperation exceeded (all) bounds

[1] Or possibly, "May (the wish) 'lasting happiness' come true for you!"
[2] Literally, "he whose religion is corrupt "

He said, "From the first moment that he was associated with me, he was a great eater of dung[1], like a dog in (time of) famine "

As he satirised him moment after moment (continuously), like a bell, the King put his hand on his (the slave's) lips, saying, "Enough!"

1015 He said, "I know you from him by that (which you have spoken) in you the spirit is foul, and in your companion (only) the mouth

Therefore do you sit far off, O foul-spirited one, that he may be the commander and you under his command "

It is (said) in the Hadíth (Traditions of the Prophet) "Know, sire, that glorification (of God) from hypocrisy is like the verdure on a midden "

Know, then, that a fair and goodly form with bad qualities (within) is not worth a farthing,

And though the form be despicable and unpleasing, (yet) when his (that person's) disposition is good, die at his feet!

1020 Know that the outward form passes away, (but) the world of reality remains for ever

How long will you play at loving the shape of the jug? Leave the shape of the jug, go, seek the water

You have seen its (outward) form, you are unaware of the reality, pick out from the shell a pearl, if you are wise

These shells of bodies in the world, though they all are living by (grace of) the Sea of Soul—

Yet there is not a pearl in every shell open your eyes and look into the heart of each one,

1025 And pick out what that one has and what this, because that costly pearl is seldom found

If you go (turn your attention) to the form, by external appearance a mountain is a hundred[2] times as much as a ruby in bigness,

Also, in respect of form, your hands and feet and hair are a hundred times as much as the contour of the eye,

But this (fact) is not hidden from you, that the two eyes are the choicest of all (your) members

By one thought that comes into the mind a hundred worlds are overturned in a single moment

1030 If the body of the Sultan is, in form (appearance), one (only), (yet) hundreds of thousands of soldiers run behind (it)

Again, the figure and form of the excellent King are ruled by one invisible thought

Behold people without end who, moved by one thought, have gone over the earth like a flood,

[1] *I e* "very scurrilous

[2] "Hundred," of course, is not to be taken in its strict numerical sense

Small is that thought in the people's eyes, but like a flood it swallowed and swept away the world

So, when you see that from a thought every craft in the world (arises and) subsists—

(That) houses and palaces and cities, mountains and plains and rivers,

Earth and ocean as well as sun and sky, are living (derive their life) from it as fishes from the sea—

Then why in your foolishness, O blind one, does the body seem to you a Solomon, and thought (only) as an ant?

To your eye the mountain appears great (to you) thought is like a mouse, and the mountain (like) a wolf

The (material) world in your eyes is awful and sublime you tremble and are frightened at the clouds and the thunder and the sky,

While in regard to the world of thought, O less (lower) than the ass, you are secure and indifferent as a witless stone,

Because you are a (mere) shape and have no portion of intelligence, you are not of human nature, you are an ass's colt

From ignorance you deem the shadow to be the substance hence to you the substance has become a plaything and of slight account

Wait till the Day when that thought and phantasy unfolds its wings and pinions without any veil (encumbrance)

You will see that the mountains have become like soft wool, (and that) this Earth of hot and cold has become naught,

You will see neither the sky nor the stars nor (any) existence but God, the One, the Living, the Loving

Here is a tale, (be it) true or false, to illustrate (these) truths

How the (King's) retainers envied the favourite slave

A King had, of his grace, preferred a certain slave above all his retinue

His allowance was the stipend of forty Amírs, a hundred Viziers would not see (receive) a tenth of its amount

Through the perfection of (his) natal star and prosperity and fortune he was an Ayaz, while the King was the Mahmúd of the time

His spirit in its origin, before (the creation of) this body, was near-related and akin to the King's spirit

(Only) that matters which has existed before the body, leave (behind you) these things which have newly sprung into being

That which matters belongs to the knower (of God), for he is not squinting his eye is (fixed) upon the things first sown

That which was sown as wheat (good) or as barley (relatively evil)—day and night his eye is fastened on that place[1] (where it was sown)

[1] Literally, "(deposited as) a pledge in that place"

Night gave birth to nothing but what she was pregnant withal designs and plots are wind, (empty) wind

1055 How should he please his heart with fair designs who sees the design of God (prevailing) over them?

He (who trusts in his own devices) is laying a snare within the snare (of God) by your life, neither this (snare) will escape (destruction) nor will that (man)

Though (in the meanwhile) a hundred herbs grow and fade, there will grow up at last that which God has sown

He (the cunning man) sowed new seed over the first seed, (but) this second (seed) is passing away, and (only) the first is sound (and enduring)

The first seed is perfect and choice, the second seed is corrupt and rotten

1060 Cast away this contrivance of yours before the Beloved—though your contrivance indeed is of His contriving

That which God has raised (and that alone) has use what He has at first sown at last grows

Whatever you sow, sow for His sake, inasmuch as you are the Beloved's captive, O lover

Do not hang about the thievish fleshly soul and its work whatsoever is not God's work is naught, naught

(Sow the good seed) ere the Day of Resurrection shall appear and the night-thief be shamed before Him whose is the Kingdom,

1065 With the goods stolen by his contrivance and craft (still) remaining on his neck at the Day of Judgement

Hundreds of thousands of minds may jump together (conspire) to lay a snare other than His snare,

(But) they only find their snare more grievous (to themselves), (for) how can straws show any power (of resistance) against the wind?

If you say, "What was the profit of (our created) being?" (I reply), "There is profit in your question, O contumacious one

If this question of yours has no profit, why should I listen to it in vain and fruitlessly?

1070 And if there are many profits in your question, then why, pray, is the world unprofitable?

And (again), if from one standpoint the world is unprofitable, from other standpoints it is advantageous

If your profit is no profit to me, (yet) since it is a profit to you, do not withdraw from it"

The beauty of Joseph profited a (whole) world (of people), though to his brethren it was a vain superfluity

The melodies of David were so dear (to the faithful), but to the interdicted (unbeliever) they were (no more than) the noise of wood

The water of the Nile was superior to the Water of Life, but to the interdicted and unbelieving it was blood

To the true believer martyrdom is life, to the hypocrite it is death and corruption

Tell (me), what single blessing is there in the world, from which some group of people is not excluded?

What profit have the ox and the ass in sugar? Every soul has a different food,

But if that food is accidental to it (and not according to its real nature), then admonition is the (proper) correction for it

As (in the case of) one who from disease has become fond of (eating) clay—though he may suppose that that (clay) is indeed his (natural) food,

He has (in reality) forgotten his original food and has betaken himself[1] to the food of disease

Having given up honey, he has eaten poison, he has made the food of disease (to be his nourishment) as (though it were) fat

Man's original food is the Light of God animal food is improper for him,

But, in consequence of disease, his mind has fallen into this (delusion), that day and night he should eat of this water and clay

(He is) pale-faced, weak-footed, faint-hearted—where is the food of *by Heaven which hath (starry) tracks*?

That is the food of the chosen ones of the (Divine) sovereignty, the eating thereof is (done) without throat or instrument

The food of the (spiritual) sun is (derived) from the light of the (celestial) Throne, (the food that belongs) to the envious and devilish is (derived) from the smoke of the (terrestrial) carpet

God said concerning the martyrs, *they are (alive with their Lord) receiving sustenance* For that food there was neither mouth nor dish

The heart is eating a (particular) food from every single companion, the heart is getting a (particular) excellence from every single (piece of) knowledge

Every human being's (outer) form is like a cup, (only) the (spiritual) eye is a percipient of his (or her) reality

You eat (receive) something from meeting with any one, and you carry away something from conjunction with any associate

When planet comes into conjunction with planet, the effect appropriate to them both is assuredly produced,

As (for example) the conjunction of man and woman brings to birth the human being, and (as) sparks arise from the conjunction of stone and iron,

And (as) from the conjunction of earth with rains (there are produced) fruits and greenery and sweet herbs,

[1] Literally, "has turned his face"

1095 And (as) from the conjunction of green things (plants and verdant spots) with man (there is produced) joy of heart and carelessness and happiness,

And (as) from the conjunction of happiness with our souls are born our goodness and beneficence

Our bodies become capable of eating and drinking when our desire for recreation (in the open air) is satisfied

Redness of countenance is (derived) from the conjunction of blood (with the face), blood is (derived) from the beautiful rose-coloured sun

Redness is the best of (all) colours, and that is (born) of the sun and is arriving (to us) from it

1100 Every land that has been conjoined with Saturn has become nitrous and is not the place for sowing

Through concurrence power comes into action[1], as (in the case of) the conjunction of the Devil with hypocrites

These spiritual truths without (possessing) any (worldly) pomp and grandeur, have pomp and grandeur from the Ninth Heaven

The pomp and grandeur belonging to (the world of) creation is a borrowed (adventitious) thing, the pomp and grandeur belonging to the (world of) Command[2] is an essential thing

For the sake of (earthly) pomp and grandeur they endure abasement, in the hope of glory they are happy in (their) abasement

1105 In the hope of a ten days' (transient) glory (full) of annoyance they have made their necks, from anxiety, (thin) as a spindle

How do not they come to this place where I am?—for in this (spiritual) glory I am the shining Sun

The rising-place of the sun is the pitch-coloured tower (of heaven), (but) my Sun is beyond (all) rising-places

His "rising-place" (is only) in relation to His motes His essence neither rose nor set

I who am left behind (surpassed in eminence) by His motes am (nevertheless) in both worlds a sun without shadow

1110 Still, I am revolving round the Sun—'tis wonderful, the cause of this is the majesty of the Sun

The Sun is acquainted with (all secondary) causes, at the same time the cord of (all secondary) causes is severed from Him[3]

Hundreds of thousands of times have I cut off (abandoned) hope—of whom? Of the Sun? Do you believe this?

Do not believe of me that I can endure to be without the Sun or the fish to be without water,

[1] *I e* what is potential becomes actual
[2] The supersensible world
[3] *I e* He is independent of them

And if I become despairing, my despair is the objective manifestation of the Sun's work, O goodly (friend)

How should the objective manifestation of the work be cut off 1115
from the very self of the Worker? How should any object of (contingent) being pasture on (derive existence from) aught but (Absolute) Being?

All (contingent) beings pasture on this Meadow, whether they be Buráq or Arab horses or even asses,

And he that has not regarded (all) becomings (movements and changes) as (proceeding) from that Sea, at every instant turns his face towards a new point of orientation

He has drunk salt water from the sweet Sea, so that the salt water has made him blind

The Sea is saying, "Drink of my water with the right hand, O blind one, that thou mayst gain sight"

Here "the right hand" is right opinion, which knows con- 1120
cerning (both) good and evil whence they are

O lance, there is a Lancer[1], so that sometimes thou becomest straight, sometimes (bent) double

Through love of Shams-i Din (the Sun of the Religion) I am without claws (powerless), else would not I make this blind one see?

Hark, O Light of the Truth, Husámu'ddin, do thou speedily heal him, to the confusion of the eye of the envious,

(Heal him with) the quick-acting tutty of majesty, the darkness-killing remedy of the recalcitrant,

Which, if it strike on the eye of the blind man, will dispel 1125
from him a hundred years' darkness

Heal all the blind ones except the envious man who from envy is bringing denial against thee

To thy envier, though it be I, do not give life, (but let me alone) so that I may be suffering the agony of (spiritual) death even as he is

(I mean) him that is envious of the Sun and him that is fretting at the existence of the Sun

Look you, this is the incurable disease which he has, alas, look you, this is one fallen for ever to the bottom of the pit

What he wants is the extinction of the Sun of eternity Tell 1130
(me), how should this desire of his come to pass?

The falcon (seeker of God) is he that comes back to the King, he that has lost the way is the blind falcon

It lost the way and fell into the wilderness, then in the wilderness it fell amongst[2] owls

It (the falcon) is wholly light (derived) from the Light of (Divine) approval, but the marshal, Fate[3], blinded it

[1] Literally, "one who turns or wields the lance"

[2] Literally, "beside"

[3] Literally, "the (Divine) destiny"

He threw dust in its eyes and took it (far) away from the (right) road, he left it amidst owls and (in) the wilderness

1135 To crown all[1], the owls attack it and tear its lovely wing-feathers and plumes

A clamour arose amongst the owls—"Ha! the falcon has come to seize our dwelling-place "

("Twas) as (when) the street-dogs, wrathful and terrifying, have fallen upon the frock of a (dervish) stranger

"How am I fit," says the falcon, "for (consorting with) owls? I give up to the owls a hundred wildernesses like this

I do not wish to stay here, I am going, I will return to the King of kings

1140 Do not kill yourselves (with agitation), O owls, for I am not settling (here) I am going home

This ruin is a thriving abode in your eyes, for me, however, the King's fore-arm is the place whither one returns "

The owl (that was warning the others) said, "The falcon is plotting to uproot you from house and home

He will seize our houses by cunning, he will tear us out of our nests by (his) hypocrisy

This devotee of guile pretends to be perfectly satisfied (with what he has), by God, he is worse than all the greedy together

1145 From greediness he eats clay as (if it were) date-syrup O friends, do not entrust the sheep's tail to the bear

He is boasting of the King and the King's hand, in order that he may lead us astray[2], simple-minded as we are

How, indeed, should a petty bird be the congener of the King? Do not listen to him, if you have (even) a little understanding

Is he the King's or the Vizier's congener? Is garlic at all suitable to sweetmeat made with walnut kernels?

(As for) his saying, from deceit and feint and artifice, 'The King with his retinue is searching after me,'

1150 Here's an absurd[3] mad fancy for you, here's a vain boast and a snare to catch blockheads!

Any one who believes this—'tis because of (his) foolishness how is a slender little bird fit for (friendship with) royalty?

If the smallest owl should strike at his brain, where is succour for him from the King?"

The falcon said, "If a single feather of mine be broken, the King of kings will uproot the (whole) owlery

What is an owl? Even if a falcon vex my heart and maltreat me,

1155 The King will heap up in every lowland and highland hundreds of thousands of stacks of falcons' heads

[1] Literally "any small thing put on the top of a load," "a last straw "
[2] Literally, "take us from the (right) road "
[3] Literally, "unacceptable "

His favours keep watch over me, wherever I go, the King is (following) behind

The phantasy of me is abiding in the King's heart sick (would be) the King's heart without the phantasy of me

When the King bids me fly in His Way I fly up to the heart's zenith, like His beams

I fly as a moon and sun, I rend the curtains of the skies

The light of intellects is from my thought, the bursting forth of heaven (into existence) is from my original nature

I am a falcon, and (yet) the *humá* becomes lost in amazement at me who is an owl, that it should know my secret?

For my sake the King bethought him of the prison (this world), and set free hundreds of thousands of those in bondage

He made me familiar with the owls for a moment, and by means of my breath (words) he made the owls (to be) falcons

Oh, happy (is) the owl that in my (soaring) flight (towards God) had the good fortune to apprehend[1] my mystery

Cling to me, that ye may become exultant (enjoying bliss), (and that) ye may become royal falcons, although ye are owls

He that is dear to such a King—wheresoever he light, why should he be a stranger?

Any one for whose pain the King is the remedy—though he wail like the reed (flute), he is not without plenty

I am the owner of the (spiritual) kingdom, I am not a lickspittle the King is beating the falcon-drum for me from the shore[2]

My falcon-drum is the call, '*Return!*' God is my witness in despite of adversary

I am not a congener of the King of kings—far be it from Him!—but I have light from Him in (His) self-manifestation

Homogeneity is not in respect of form and essence water becomes homogeneous with earth in the plant

Wind (air) becomes homogeneous with fire in consistency, wine at last[3] becomes homogeneous with the constitution (of the body)

Since my *genus* is not the *genus* of my King, my ego has passed away (*fana*) for the sake of His ego

Inasmuch as my ego passed away, He remained alone I roll at the feet of His horse, like dust

The (individual) soul (self) became dust, and the (only) signs of it are the mark of His feet on its dust

Become dust at His feet for the sake of this mark, in order that you may become the crown on the head of the lofty

Let not my form beguile you partake of my dessert before my departure"

[1] Literally, "from good fortune apprehended"
[2] Literally, "from the farther side," *i.e* from the world beyond
[3] *I e* after it has been digested and assimilated

Oh, (there is) many a one whom the form waylaid he aimed at the form (of the holy man) and (in reality) struck at God

After all, this soul is joined to the body, (but) has this soul any likeness to the body?

1180 The sparkle of the eye's light is paired with the fat[1], the light of the heart is hidden in a drop of blood,

Joy (has its seat) in the kidneys, grief in the liver, intellect, (bright) as a candle, inside the brain in the head.

These connexions are not without a how and a why, (but) as regards knowledge of the why (our) minds are impotent

The Universal Soul came into contact with the partial (individual) soul, and the (latter) soul received from it a pearl and put it into its bosom

Through that touch on its bosom the (individual) soul became pregnant, like Mary, with a heart-beguiling Messiah,

1185 Not the Messiah who is (a traveller) on land and water, (but) the Messiah who is beyond (the limitation of) measuring (space)

So when the soul has been impregnated by the Soul of soul, by such a soul the world is impregnated

Then the world gives birth to another world, and displays to this congregated people a place of congregation (for the realities which are raised to life)

Though I should speak and recount till the Resurrection, I lack the power to describe this (spiritual) resurrection

These sayings (of mine), indeed, are really an "O Lord" (a prayer addressed to God), the words are the lure for the breath of a sweet-lipped One[2]

1190 How, then, should he (that seeks the answer) fail (to pray)? How should he be silent, inasmuch as "Here am I" is (always) coming in response to his "O Lord"?

It is a "Here am I" that you cannot hear, but can taste (feel and enjoy) from head to foot[3]

How the thirsty man threw bricks from the top of the wall into the stream of water

On the bank of the stream there was a high wall, and on the top of the wall a sorrowful thirsty man

The wall hindered him from (reaching) the water, he was in distress for the water, like a fish

Suddenly he threw a brick into the water the noise of the water came to his ear like spoken words,

1195 Like words spoken by a sweet and delicious friend the noise of the water made him drunken as (though it were) wine

[1] *I e* the white of the eye
[2] *I e* they seek to capture the Divine answer to prayer
[3] *I e* it is a mystical experience absorbing every sense and faculty

From the pleasure of (hearing) the noise of the water, that sorely tried man began to hurl and tear off bricks from that place

The water was making a noise, that is to say, (it was crying), "Hey, what is the advantage to you of this hurling a brick at me?"

The thirsty man said, "O water, I have two advantages I will nowise refrain from this work

The first advantage is (my) hearing the noise of the water, which to thirsty men is (melodious) as a rebeck

The noise thereof has become (to me) like the noise of (the 1200
trumpet of) Isráfíl by this (noise) life has been transferred (restored) to one (that was) dead,

Or (it is) like the noise of thunder in days of spring—from it (the thunder) the garden obtains so many (lovely) ornaments,

Or like the days of alms to a poor man, or like the message of deliverance to a prisoner

'Tis like the breath of the Merciful (God) which, without mouth, comes to Mohammed from Yemen,

Or 'tis like the scent of Ahmad (Mohammed), the Apostle (of God), which in intercession comes to the sinner,

Or like the scent of beauteous, graceful Joseph, (which) 1205
strikes upon the soul of lean Jacob

The other advantage is that, (with) every brick I tear off this (wall), I come (nearer) to *running water*,

Since by diminution of the bricks the high wall becomes lower every time that one is removed[1]

The lowness (destruction) of the wall becomes a means of access (to the water), separation from it is the remedy bringing about a union (with the water)"

The tearing away of the adhesive (firmly joined) bricks is (analogous to) prostration (in prayer) (it is) the cause of nearness (to God), for (God has said), '*And prostrate thyself and draw near* (*to Me*)'

So long as this wall is high-necked (lofty and proud), it is an 1210
obstacle to this bowing of the head (in prayer)

'Tis impossible to perform the prostration on the Water of Life, until I gain deliverance from this earthly body

The more thirsty any one on the top of the wall is, the more quickly does he tear off the bricks and turfs

The more any one is in love with the noise of the water, the bigger clods does he tear away from the barrier

He, at the noise of the water, is filled with wine (ecstasy) up to the neck, (while) the stranger (to love) hears nothing but the sound of the splash

[1] Literally, "every time that he (the dilapidator) tore off (a brick)"

1215 Oh, blest is he that deems his early days an opportunity to be seized, and pays his debt—

In the days when he has the power, (when) he has health and strength of heart and vigour,

And (when) that season of youth, like a garden green and fresh, is bringing (to ripeness) produce and fruit without any stint,

(When) the fountains of strength and lust (are) flowing, (so that) thereby the soil of the body is made verdant,

(When he is still like) a well-kept house, with its roof very lofty, its sides (walls) symmetrical, without buttressing[1] and clamps—

1220 Ere the days of eld arrive and bind your neck *with a halter of palm-fibres*,

(Ere) the soil becomes nitrous (barren), crumbling, and poor —never did good herbage grow from nitrous soil,

(When) the water of strength and the water of lust (is) cut off, and he has no profit from himself or others

The eyebrows fallen down like a crupper-strap, the eyes grown moist and dim,

The face, from wrinkling, like the back of a lizard, speech and taste and teeth gone out of use,

1225 The day late, the ass lame, and the way long, the shop ruined and the business in disorder[2],

The roots of bad habit firmly set, and the power to tear them up decreased

How the Governor commanded a certain man, saying, "Root up the thornbush which you have planted on the road"

As (for example) that callous fair-spoken person planted a thornbush in the middle of the road

The wayfarers reproached him and oftentimes told him to dig it up he dug it not up

Every moment the thornbush was growing bigger the people's feet were streaming with[3] blood from its pricks

1230 The people's clothes were being rent by the thorns the feet of the poor were being wounded pitiably

When the Governor said to him with earnestness, "Dig this up," he replied, "Yes, I will dig it up some day"

For a long while he promised (to dig it up) to-morrow and to-morrow, (meantime) his thornbush became robust in constitution

[1] Literally, the "mixture" (*contaminatio*) caused by the necessity of repairing and supporting the original framework

[2] Literally, "gone out of order"

[3] Literally, 'full of'

One day the Governor said to him, "O false promiser, go forward with my affair, do not creep back "

He replied, "O uncle, the days are between us[1] " "Make haste," said he, "do not put off payment of my debt "

You who say "To-morrow," be aware of this, that with every 1235
day that time is coming (and going),

That evil tree is growing younger, while this digger is waxing old and sorely distressed

The thornbush (is) in (process of gaining) strength and (in) ascent, its digger (is) in (process of) aging and decline

The thornbush every day and every moment is green and fresh, its digger is every day more sickly and withered

It is growing younger, you older be quick and do not waste your time!

Know that every single bad habit of yours is a thornbush 1240
many a time, after all, have its thorns pierced your foot

Many a time have you been wounded by your own (evil) habits—you have no sense, you are very senseless

If to the wounding of other persons, which comes to pass from your evil nature,

You are indifferent, at any rate you are not (indifferent) to your own wounds you are the torment of yourself and of every stranger

Either take up the axe and strike like a man—like 'Alí, destroy this gate of Khaybar—

Or unite these thorns with the rosebush unite the light of 1245
the friend (of God) with the (sensual) fire,

In order that his light may extinguish your fire, (and that) union with him may make your thorns roses

You are like Hell, he is a true believer the extinction of the fire (of Hell) by means of a true believer is possible

Mustafa (Mohammed) said concerning the speech of Hell, that on account of fear it begins humbly to entreat the true believer,

And says to him, "Pass quickly away from me, O king hark, for thy light has taken away the burning of my fire "

Therefore the true believer's light is the death of the fire, 1250
because without an opposite the removal of the (other) opposite is impossible

On the Day of Justice (Judgement) the fire will be the opponent of the light, since the former was aroused by (God's) wrath, the latter by (His) grace

If you are wishing to remove the evil of the fire, direct the water of (Divine) mercy against the heart of the fire

The true believer is the fountain of that water of mercy the pure spirit of the well-doer is the Water of Life

[1] *I e* "there is still some time before the account between us need be settled "

Hence your fleshly soul is fleeing from him, because you are of fire, (while) he (is) the water of the stream

1255 Fire becomes fleeing from water for the reason that its fire (flame and heat) is ruined by water

Your sense and thought are wholly of the fire, the sense of the Shaykh (spiritual guide) and his thought are the beauteous Light

When the water of his light trickles on the fire, *chak chak* (a gnashing sound) rises from the fire, and it leaps up (in fury)

When it makes (the sound) *chak chak*, say you to it, "Death and woe (to thee)," in order that this hell, (which is) your fleshly soul, may become cold (quenched),

So that it may not burn your rose-garden, so that it may not burn your justice and well-doing

1260 After that, anything that you sow will yield fruit (or flowers), it will yield anemones and wild roses and thyme

Once more we are going wide of the straight way turn back, O master —where is our way?

We were (engaged) in showing, O envious one, that your ass is lame and the place of alighting (journey's end) far off, (so you must be) quick

The year has turned late, it is not sowing-time, (and you have produced) nothing except black shame[1] and foul deeds

The worm has entered the root of the body's tree it must be dug up and put in the fire

1265 Hark and hark (again), O wayfarer! 'Tis late, life's sun is gone towards the pit (is about to set)

(During) these (one or) two brief days when you have (some) strength, (be) quick, flap your wings generously[2]

Devote this (small) amount of seed that you have remaining, in order that long life may grow from these (one or) two moments

Whilst this jewelled lamp is not (yet) extinguished, see you trim its wick and (supply it with) oil immediately

Beware! Do not say "To-morrow"—for (many) to-morrows have passed Let not the days of sowing pass away altogether

1270 Listen to my admonition that the body is a strong bond put off the old, if you have desire for newness

Shut the lips and open the palm filled with gold leave off being a miser with the body, exhibit munificence

Munificence is the abandonment of lusts and pleasures, no one who is sunken in lust rises up (again)

This munificence is a branch of the cypress of Paradise woe to him that lets such a branch go from his hand!

[1] Literally, "blackness of face"

[2] *I e* exert yourself unsparingly in doing good works

This abandonment of sensuality is *the firmest handle* this branch draws the spirit up to Heaven

(So act) that the branch of munificence, O righteous man[1], drawing you aloft may bear you to its origin

You are Joseph (full) of beauty, and this world is as the well, and this rope (to draw you forth) is patience with (submission to) the command of God

O Joseph, the rope is come put your two hands upon it Do not neglect the rope, (for) it has grown late

Praise be to God, that this rope has been dangled, (and that) grace and mercy have been blended together,

So that you may behold the world of the new spirit, a world very manifest, (though) invisible

This (phenomenal) world of non-existence has become like (real) existence, while that world of (real) existence has become very hidden

The dust is on the wind it is playing, it is making a false show and forming a veil

This, which is busy (in appearance), is (really) idle and (superficial, like) a husk, and that which is hidden is its core and origin

The dust is as a tool in the hand of the wind deem the wind high and of high descent

The gaze of the eye of dust falls on the dust, an eye that sees the wind is of another sort

A horse knows a horse, because it (one horse) is associated (homogeneous with other horses), likewise (only) a rider knows the things appertaining to a rider

The sensuous eye is the horse, and the Light of God is the rider without the rider the horse itself is useless

Therefore train the horse (so as to cure it) of bad habits, else the horse will be rejected before the King

The horse's eye finds the way from the King's eye without the King's eye its eye is in desperate plight

The eye of horses, whithersoever you call it except to grass and pasture, says, "Nay, why (should we go)?"

The Light of God mounts (as a rider) on the sensuous eye, and then the soul yearns after God

How should the riderless horse know the marks of the road? The King is needed (to ride it) in order that it may know the King's road

Go towards a sense on which the Light is riding that Light is a good companion for the sense

The Light of God is an ornament to the light of sense this is the meaning of *light upon light*

[1] Literally, "O man of good religion"

The light of sense draws (a man) towards earth, the Light of God bears him aloft,

1295 Because sensible things are a lower world the Light of God is (as) the sea, and the sense as a dew-drop

But that which rides on it (on the sense) is not manifested save by good effects and words

The sensuous light, which is gross and heavy, is hidden in the black of the eyes

Inasmuch as you are not seeing the light of sense with (your) eye, how should you see the light of that religious one (the saint) with (your) eye?

The light of sense is hidden notwithstanding this grossness how (then) should not that radiance be hidden which is pure (and subtle)?

1300 This world, like straws in the hand (sway) of the wind, (which is) the (world) unseen, has adopted helplessness as its (only) resource[1], and the dispensation of the Unseen

Makes it now lofty, now low, makes it now sound (and whole), now broken,

Now carries it to the right, now to the left, now makes it roses, now thorns

See (how) the Hand (is) hidden, while the pen is writing, the horse careering, while the Rider is invisible

See the arrow flying, and the Bow not in sight, the (individual) souls manifest, and the Soul of souls hidden

1305 Do not break the arrow, for it is the arrow of a King, it is not shot at long range (at random), it is from the thumb-stall of One who knows (how to hit the target)

God said, "*Thou didst not throw when thou threwest*" the action of God has precedence over (our) actions

Break your own anger, do not break the arrow the eye of your anger reckons milk (to be) blood

Give the arrow a kiss and bring it to the King—the blood-stained arrow, wet with your blood

That which is seen is helpless and confined and feeble, and that which is unseen is so fierce and uncontrollable

1310 We are the (hunted) prey to whom belongs such a (fearful) snare? We are the ball (for the blows) of the polo-bat—and where is the Batsman?

He tears, He sews where is this Tailor? He blows, He burns where is this Fire-kindler[2]?

At one hour He makes the true saint an unbeliever, at another hour He makes the (impious) deist an (orthodox) ascetic,

For the *mukhliṣ* (sincere worshipper) is in danger of the snare until he becomes entirely purged of self,

[1] Literally, "trade" or "practice"
[2] Literally, "one who throws naphtha"

Because he is (still) on the Way, and the brigands are numberless (only) he escapes who is under God's safeguard

(If) he has not become (selfless, like) a pure mirror, he is (no 1315
more than) *mukhlis* (if) he has not caught the bird, he is (still) hunting,

(But) when the *mukhlis* has become *mukhlas*[1], he is delivered he has reached the place of safety and has won the victory

No mirror (ever) became iron again, no bread (ever) became the wheat in the stack

No full-grown grape (ever) became a young grape, no mature fruit (ever) became premature fruit

Become mature and be far from (the possibility of) change for the worse go, become the Light, like Burhán-i Muhaqqiq

When you have escaped from self, you have become wholly 1320
the proof (of God) when the slave (in you) has become naught, you have become the King

[And if you wish to behold (this mystery) plainly, Saláhu'ddín has shown it forth he has made the eyes to see and has opened (them)

From his eyes and mien every eye that hath the Light of *Hú* (God) has discerned (mystical) poverty

The Shaykh (Saláhu'ddín) is one who, like God, acts without instrument, giving lessons to his disciples without anything said][2]

In his hand the heart is submissive like soft wax his seal makes (the impression) now (of) shame, now (of) fame

The seal impressed on his wax is telling of the seal-ring, of 1325
whom, again, does the device tell, (which is) graven on the stone of the ring?

It tells of the thought of the Goldsmith—(all this) is a chain, every link (inserted) in another

Whose voice is this echo in the mountains of (our) hearts? Sometimes this mountain is full of the voice, sometimes it is empty

Wheresoever he is, he is the Sage, the Master—may his voice not forsake[3] this mountain!

There is a mountain that (only) doubles the voice, there is a mountain that makes it hundredfold

At that voice and speech the mountain lets gush forth hundreds 1330
of thousands of springs of clear water

[1] The *mukhliṣ* is he who worships devotedly, but regards his devotion as his own, while the *mukhlaṣ*, whom God has purged of self, attributes all his actions to God

[2] Vv 1321–23 are omitted in the two oldest MSS As they refer to Ṣaláḥu ddín Zarkub (the Goldbeater), their insertion here was probably suggested by a misinterpretation of v 1326

[3] Literally, "not be quit of"

Inasmuch as that grace emanates (even) from the mountain, the waters in the springs become blood

'Twas on account of that monarch of auspicious gait[1] that Mount Sinai was (turned to) rubies from end to end

(All) the parts of the mountain received life and intelligence—after all, are we inferior to stone, O people?

Neither is there gushing from the soul a single spring, nor is the body becoming one of those clad in green,

1335 Neither is there in it the echo of the cry of longing, nor the purity (born) of the draught of (wine bestowed by) the Cup-bearer

Where is (so great) zeal, that they should entirely dig up such a mountain as this with axe and with pick?—

(In the hope that) maybe a Moon will shine upon its particles, (that) maybe the radiance of the Moon will find a way into it

Inasmuch as the (temporal) Resurrection shall dig up the mountains, how shall it cast the shadow (of protection) over us?

How is this (spiritual) Resurrection inferior to that (temporal) Resurrection? That (temporal) Resurrection is the wound, and this (spiritual) Resurrection is as the plaster

1340 Every one that has seen (experienced) this plaster is safe from the wound every evil one that has seen this good is a well-doer

Oh, happy is the ugly one to whom the beauteous one has become a companion, alas for one of rosy countenance with whom autumn has consorted!

When lifeless bread is companioned with life, the bread becomes living and is turned into the substance of that (life)

Dark faggots become the companions of fire the darkness departed, and all was turned into light

When the dead ass fell into the salt-mine, it put aside asininity and mortality

1345 *The baptism of Allah* is the dyeing-vat of *Hu* (the Absolute God) therein (all) piebald things become of one colour

When he (the mystic) falls into the vat, and you say to him, "Arise," he says in rapture, "I am the vat do not blame (me)"

That "I am the vat" is the (same as) saying "I am God" he has the colour of the fire, albeit he is iron

The colour of the iron is naughted in the colour of the fire it (the iron) boasts of (its) fieriness, though (actually) it is like one who keeps silence

When it has become like gold of the mine in redness, then without tongue its boast is "I am the fire"

1350 It has become glorified by the colour and nature of the fire it says, "I am the fire, I am the fire

I am the fire, if thou have doubt and suspicion, make trial, put thy hand upon me

[1] Moses

I am the fire, if it seem dubious to thee, lay thy face upon my face for one moment "

When Man receives light from God, he is worshipped by the angels because of his being chosen (by God)

Also, (he is) worshipped by that one whose spirit, like the angel, has been freed from contumacy and doubt

What fire? What iron? Close your lips do not laugh at the 1355
beard of the assimilator's simile[1]

Do not set foot in the Sea[2], speak not of It on the shore of the Sea keep silence, biting your lips (in amazement)

Though (one equal to) a hundred like me would not have the strength to bear the Sea, yet I cannot refrain from the drowning waters of the Sea

May my soul and mind be a sacrifice to the Sea this Sea has paid the blood-price of mind and soul

I will march in It as long as my feet move, when feet remain not, I am (plunged) in It, like ducks

An unrespectful person present is better than one absent 1360
though the ring be crooked, is it not on the door?

O defiled in body, frequent[3] the tank outside of the tank, how shall a man be cleansed?

The pure one who has been banished from the tank becomes far also from his purity

The purity of this tank is infinite, the purity of bodies is of little weight,

Because the heart (though it) is a tank, yet in ambush (out of sight) it has a hidden channel to the Sea

Your finite purity wants reinforcement, otherwise, number is 1365
diminished in (the course of) expenditure

The water said to the defiled one, "Hasten (to come) into me " The defiled one said, "I feel shame before the water "

Said the water, "Without me how shall this shame go? Without me how shall this defilement be removed?"

Every defiled one who hides from the water is (an example of the saying that) "Shame hinders Faith "

The heart is muddied by the steps of the body's tank, the body is cleansed by the water of the heart's tanks

Haunt the steps of the heart's tank, O son, take heed and 1370
always beware of the steps of the body's tank

The sea of the body is dashing against the sea of the heart, (but) between them is *a barrier which they shall not cross*

Whether you be straight (righteous) or crooked, always creep forwards to Him, do not creep backwards

[1] *I e* do not mock the comparison by suggesting that it corresponds with the reality

[2] *I e* leave the Sea of Divine Unity untouched and unprofaned by your comparisons

[3] Literally, "move round about "

If in the presence of kings there be danger to life, yet they that aspire cannot refrain from (presence with) Him

Since the King is sweeter than sugar, 'tis better that life should go (as a sacrifice) to (that) sweetness

1375 O blamer (of lovers), safety be thine! O seeker of safety, thou art infirm[1]

My soul is a furnace it is happy with the fire 'tis enough for the furnace that it is the fire's house

For Love, as (for) the furnace, there is something to be burned[2] any one that is blind to this is not a furnace

When the provision of unprovidedness has become your provision, you have gained life everlasting, and death is gone

When the pain (of love) has begun to increase your (spiritual) joy, roses and lilies have taken possession of the garden of your soul

1380 That which is the dread of others is your safety (safeguard) the duck is (made) strong by the river, the domestic fowl weak

Once more have I become mad, O Physician! Once more have I become frenzied, O Beloved!

The rings (links) of Thy chain are multiform every single ring gives a different madness

The gift of every ring is (consists in) different forms therefore I have a different madness at every moment

So "Madness is of different forms"—this has become a proverb, especially (is it true) as regards the chain of this most glorious Prince

1385 Such a madness has broken the bonds (of my reason) that all madmen would give me admonition

How friends came to the madhouse for Dhu 'l-Nún—may God sanctify his honoured spirit!

It so happened to Dhu 'l-Nun the Egyptian that a new agitation and madness was born within him

His agitation became so great that salt (bitterness) from it was reaching (all) hearts up to above the sky

Beware, O (thou of) salty soil, do not put thy agitation beside (in comparison with) the agitation of the holy lords (saints)

The people could not endure his madness his fire was carrying off their beards[3]

1390 When (that) fire fell on the beards of the vulgar, they bound him and put him in a prison

There is no possibility of pulling back this rein, though the vulgar be distressed by this way[4]

[1] Literally, "having weak stays or handles"
[2] *I e* the dross of sensual qualities
[3] *I e* in his ecstasy he had no regard for their formal religion
[4] *I e* the way of mystical transport and ecstasy

These (spiritual) kings have seen (themselves in) danger of their lives from the vulgar, for this multitude are blind, and the kings (are) without (a visible) mark

When authority is in the hands of profligates, (a) Dhu 'l-Nún is inevitably in prison

The great king rides alone! Such a unique pearl in the hands of children!

What pearl? (Nay), the Sea hidden in a drop, a Sun concealed in a mote

A Sun showed itself as a mote, and little by little uncovered its face

All motes vanished in it, the (whole) world became intoxicated by it and (then) became sober

When the pen (of authority) is in the hand of a traitor, unquestionably Mansúr[1] is on a gibbet

When this affair (dominion) belongs to the foolish, the necessary consequence is (that) *they kill the prophets*

Through folly the people who had lost the (right) way said to the prophets, "*Lo, we augur ill from you*"

See the ignorance of the Christian appealing for protection to the Lord who was suspended (on the Cross)!

Since, according to his (the Christian's) belief, He was crucified by the Jews, how then can He protect him?

Inasmuch as the heart of that King (Jesus) bleeds on account of them (the Christians), how should there be (for them) the inviolable defence of *whilst thou art amongst them*?

To the pure gold and to the goldsmith the danger from the false counterfeiter is greater (than from any one else)

Josephs are concealed on account of the jealousy of the ugly, for because of enemies the beautiful live in the fire (of tribulation)

Josephs are in the pit through the guile of (their) brethren, who from envy give Joseph to the wolves

What happened to Joseph of Egypt on account of envy? This envy is a big wolf in covert

Of necessity, kind Jacob always had fear and dread for Joseph because of this wolf

The outward (visible) wolf, indeed, did not prowl about (approach) Joseph, (but) this envy has actually surpassed wolves (in malignity)

This wolf dealt its wound, and by way of specious excuse came (the words), "*Lo, we went to compete with one another*"

Hundreds of thousands of wolves have not this cunning, (but) this wolf will at last be put to shame—stop (and see)!—

Because on the Day of Bale the envious will without doubt be (raised from the dead and) brought together (to Judgement) in the shape of wolves

[1] Ḥalláj

The resurrection of the greedy vile eater of carrion (unlawful food) will be in the shape of a hog on the Day of Reckoning

Adulteris (erit) foetor membri latentis, wine-drinkers will have stinking mouths

1415 The hidden stench that was reaching (only) to (people's) hearts will become sensible and manifest at the Resurrection

The being of Man is a jungle be on your guard against this being, if you are of that (Divine) Breath

In our being there are thousands of wolves and hogs, (there is) goodly and ungoodly and fair and foul

To the disposition that is preponderant belongs the decision (as to what you are) when the gold is more than the copper, it (the mixture) is gold

The manner of acting that preponderates in your nature—in that same form you must needs rise (from the dead)

1420 At one hour a wolf enters into Man, at another hour a moon-like beauty with the face of Joseph

Good and hateful qualities pass from bosoms into bosoms by a hidden way,

Nay, indeed, wisdom and knowledge and excellence pass from Man into the ox and the ass

The stumbling (restive) horse becomes smooth-paced and docile, the bear dances, the goat also salaams

Volition has passed from human beings into the dog, so that he has become a shepherd or a hunter or a guardian (of the house)

1425 Into the dog of the Companions (of the Cave) there passed from those Sleepers a (moral) disposition, so that he had become a seeker of God

At every moment a (different) species bursts up in the breast now a devil, and now an angel, now wild beasts

From that marvellous Jungle with which every lion is acquainted, there is a hidden way to the breasts which ensnare (the spiritual prey)[1]

O you who are less than a dog, steal the spiritual pearl from within—from within (the breasts of) them that know God

As you (must) steal, at any rate (let it be) that lovely pearl, as you are going to bear a burden, at any rate (let it be) a noble one

How the disciples understood that Dhu 'l-Nún had not become mad, (but) had acted with intention

1430 The friends went to the prison (to inquire) about the story of Dhu 'l-Nún, and expressed an opinion concerning it,

Saying, "Perchance he does this purposely, or there is some

[1] Literally, "to the snare of the breasts"

(deep) wisdom (in it) he is an exemplar[1] and a shining light[2] in this religion

Far, far be it from his sea-like (profound) intelligence that madness should prompt him to folly!

God forbid, in view of the perfection of his (spiritual) attainments, that the cloud of sickness should cover his moon!

He has gone into the house (and taken refuge) from the wickedness of the vulgar he has become mad on account of the infamy of the sane

From (feeling) the disgrace of the dull body-serving intellect, he has purposely gone and become mad,

Saying, 'Bind me fast and with the tail[3] of a cow smite me on head and back, and do not dispute this (matter),

That from the stroke of the part (of the cow) I may gain life, as the murdered man (gained life) from the cow of Moses, O trusty ones,

That I may be made happy by the stroke of a part of the cow, (that I may) become well (whole), like the murdered man (by means) of the cow of Moses' "

The murdered man was revived by the stroke of the cow's tail he became pure gold (in spirit), even as copper (is transmuted) by the elixir

The murdered man sprang up and told the secrets he revealed that bloodthirsty gang

He said plainly, "I was killed by these people who are now disturbed (with anger) in contending against me "

When this gross body is killed, the essence that knows (spiritual) secrets is brought to life

Its spirit beholds Paradise and Hell-fire and discerns all the mysteries

It reveals the devilish murderers, it reveals the snare of deceit and guile

To kill the cow (the fleshly soul) is the stipulation of (imposed by) the (Súfí) Path, in order that the spirit may be restored to consciousness by the stroke of her tail

Kill most quickly the cow, your fleshly soul, so that the hidden spirit may become alive and conscious

Resumption of the story of Dhu 'l-Nún, may God sanctify his spirit!

When those persons arrived near him, he shouted, "Hey, who are ye? Take care!"

They said respectfully, "We are some of thy friends we have come hither in devotion to ask after thee

[1] Literally, "one to whom all turn "
[2] Literally, "a sign or evidence "
[3] Literally, "instrument "

How art thou, O Sea of manifold intelligence? What aspersion on thy intelligence is this (alleged) madness?

1450 How should the smoke of the bath-stove attain unto the Sun? How should the 'Anqa be crushed by the crow?

Do not withhold (the truth) from us explain this matter, we are lovers (of thee) do not behave to us in this fashion

One ought not to drive lovers away or dupe them by mask and false pretence

Communicate the secret, O King do not hide[1] thy face in the cloud, O Moon!

We are loving and true and with wounded (bleeding) hearts in the two worlds we have fixed our hearts on thee (alone)"

1455 He began (to use) foul words and bad names recklessly he spoke gibberish[2] like madmen

He jumped up and let fly stones and sticks, the whole party fled for fear of blows

He laughed loudly and tossed his head (in scorn) "Look," said he, "at the vain bluster[3] of these friends!

See the friends! Where is the sign of (true) friends? To (true) friends pain is as (dear as) life"

How should a friend turn aside from the pain inflicted by his friend? Pain is the kernel, and friendship is (only) as the husk to it

1460 Has not joy in tribulation and calamity and suffering become the sign of (true) friendship?

A friend is like gold, tribulation is like the fire the pure gold is glad in the heart of the fire

How Luqman's master tested his sagacity

(Was it) not (the case) that (this happened) to Luqmán, who was a pure (unselfish) slave, and day and night was brisk in service?

His master used to prefer him (to all others) in the work (of service) and deem him better than his own sons,

Because Luqmán, though he was slave-born, was the master (of himself) and was free from sensual desire

1465 A certain king said to the Shaykh (spiritual Director) in conversation, "Ask me to bestow some bounty upon thee"

He answered, "O King, are not you ashamed to say such a thing to me? Come higher!

I have two slaves, and they are vile, and those two are rulers and lords over you"

[1] Literally, "put covertly"
[2] Literally, "(the letters) *sé* and *gáf*"
[3] Literally, "the wind of the beard"

Said the King, "What are those two? That is a mistake" He replied, "The one is anger and the other is lust"

Regard as a king him that is unconcerned with kingship, him whose light shines forth without moon or sun

(Only) that one whose essence is the treasury (of spiritual truths) possesses the treasury (only) he that is an enemy to (his own) existence possesses (real) existence.

Luqmán's master (was) like a master outwardly, in reality his (Luqmán's) master (was) Luqmán's slave[1]

In the topsy-turvy world there is many a one of this (kind) a pearl is less than a straw in their sight

Every desert has been named *mafáza* (place of safety) a name and specious form has ensnared their understanding

In the case of one class of people, the dress makes (a man) known (if he is dressed) in a *qabá*, they say that he belongs to the vulgar

In the case of one class of people (the distinguishing mark is) the hypocritical appearance of asceticism, (but) light is needed, that (any one) may be a spy on asceticism (and detect its true character)

Light is needed, (a light) purged of cant and noxiousness, that he may know a man without (the evidence of) deed or word,

And enter into his heart by way of the intellect, and behold his real state and not be confined to tradition[2]

The chosen servants of (God) the Knower of things unseen are, in the spiritual world, the spies on hearts

He (such a one) enters within the heart like a fancy the mystery of the (real) state is unveiled to him

In the body of the sparrow what power and faculty is there that is hidden from the intellect of the falcon?

He who has become acquainted with the secrets of *Hu* (God), what to him is the secret (inmost consciousness) of created beings?

He whose walk is on the spheres, how should it be hard for him to walk on the earth?

Since iron became wax in the hand of David, what should wax be in his hand, O man of iniquity?

Luqmán was a slave in appearance, a master (in reality) servitude was (only) a frontispiece[3] on his outside

When the master goes to a place where he is not known[4], he puts (his own) clothes on his slave

He (himself) puts on the slave's clothes and makes his slave the leader

[1] Or, "he was a slave, (and) Luqmán was his master"
[2] *I e* derived, as opposed to immediate, knowledge
[3] Literally, "a coloured title-page and preface", *i e* his external aspect was that of a slave, in contrast with what lay underneath
[4] And where he does not wish to be recognised

He goes behind him on the road, as slaves do, lest any one should recognise him (as the master)

"O slave," says he, "go you and sit in the place of honour I will take (your) shoes, like the meanest slave

Treat (me) roughly and revile me, do not bestow any respect on me

1490 I hold neglect of service to be your (proper) service, since I have sown the seed of contrivance by dwelling in a foreign land[1] "

Masters have performed these slavish offices in order that it might be thought that they were slaves

They saw their fill of masterdom and were sated (with it) (hence) they have made ready for (doing) the work (of slaves)

On the contrary, these slaves of sensuality have represented themselves as masters of intellect and spirit

From the master (the spiritual man) comes the practice of self-abasement, from the slave (the sensual man) comes naught but slavishness

1495 So topsy-turvy, then, are the arrangements between that world and this world Know this (for sure)

Luqmán's master was aware of this hidden state (of Luqmán), he had seen signs (thereof) in him

That traveller (Luqmán's master) knew the secret, (but) quietly pursued his way[2] for the sake of the good (which he had in view)

He would have set him free at the first, but he sought to content (comply with the wish of) Luqmán,

Because it was Luqmán's desire (to remain a slave), in order that none might know the secret of that brave[3] and generous youth

1500 What wonder (is it) that you should hide your secret from the evil (one)? The wonder is this, that you should hide the secret from yourself

Hide your work from your own eyes, that your work may be safe from the evil eye

Yield yourself up to the snare of the (Divine) reward, and then, (being) beside yourself, steal something from yourself

They give opium to the wounded man, in order that they may extract the point (of a spear or arrow) from his body

At the hour of death he is torn with pain, he becomes preoccupied with that, and (meanwhile) his spirit (life) is taken away

1505 Inasmuch as, to whatsoever thought you give up your mind, something will secretly be taken away from you,

(And inasmuch as) whatsoever you may cogitate and (whatsoever) acquisition you may make, the thief will enter from the side where you feel safe,

[1] *I e* "since I have gone abroad for the sake of carrying out a secret design "
[2] Literally "drove his ass " [3] Literally, "that lion "

Become occupied, therefore, with that which is better, in order that the thief may take away from you something that is less (in worth)

When the trader's bales fall into the water, he lays his hands upon the better merchandise

Since something will (certainly) be lost in the water, take leave of the less (worse) and gain (possession of) the better

How the excellence and sagacity of Luqmán became manifest to those who made trial (of him)

Whatever food they brought to him (Luqmán's master), he 1510
would send some one to Luqmán after (receiving it),

That Luqmán might put his hand to (partake of) it, on purpose that the master might eat his (Luqmán's) leavings

He would eat his remnants and be enraptured[1] any food that he (Luqmán) did not taste, he (the master) would throw away,

Or if he ate (of it), ('twould be) without heart and without appetite this is (the sign of) an affinity without end

They had brought a melon as a present "Go," said he, "call (hither) my son, Luqmán "

When he cut it and gave him a slice, he ate it as if it were sugar 1515
and honey

On account of the pleasure with which he ate (it), he gave him a second (slice), (and went on) till the slices (given him) reached the seventeenth

One slice remained He said, "I will eat this (myself), so that I may see what a sweet melon this is

He (Luqmán) eats it with such pleasure that from his delight (all) natures have become eager and craving the morsel "

As soon as he (the master) ate it, by its sourness there was kindled fire (which) blistered his tongue and burnt his throat

He became beside himself for a while on account of its sour- 1520
ness, after that, he said to him, "O (you who are) soul and world,

How did you make all this poison an antidote? How did you deem this cruelty to be kindness?

What patience is this? For what reason is this great fortitude? Or, perchance, in your opinion this life of yours is an enemy (which you would fain destroy)

Why did not you cunningly bring (forward) a plea, saying, 'I have an excuse (for declining to eat) desist for a while' "

Luqmán said, "From thy munificent hand I have eaten so much that I am (bent) double with shame

[1] Literally, "he would raise (a feeling of) enthusiasm "

1525 I was ashamed not to eat one bitter thing from thy hand, O thou who art possessed of knowledge

Since all parts of me have grown from thy bounty and are plunged in thy bait and snare—

If I make outcry and complaint because of one bitter thing, may the dust of a hundred roads be on (all) parts of me!

It (the melon) had the enjoyment of thy sugar-bestowing hand how could it (such enjoyment) leave any bitterness in this melon?"

By love bitter things become sweet, by love pieces of copper become golden,

1530 By love dregs become clear, by love pains become healing,

By love the dead is made living, by love the king is made a slave

This love, moreover, is the result of knowledge who (ever) sat in foolishness[1] on such a throne?

On what occasion did deficient knowledge give birth to this love? Deficient (knowledge) gives birth to love, but (only love) for that which is (really) lifeless

When it sees in a lifeless being the colour (appearance) of a desired one, ('tis as though) it heard the voice of a beloved in a whistle

1535 Deficient knowledge cannot discriminate of necessity it deems the lightning to be the sun

When the Prophet called the "deficient" (man) accursed, (his meaning) as interpreted was "deficiency of mind,"

Because one whose body is deficient is the object of (Divine) mercy cursing and repulse (directed) against the object of (Divine) mercy are improper

'Tis deficiency of mind that is the bad disease it is the cause of (God's) curse and merits banishment (from His presence),

Forasmuch as the perfecting of minds is not remote (impossible), but the perfecting of the body is not within our power

1540 The miscreance and Pharaoh-like pride of every infidel who is far (from God) have all been produced by deficiency of mind

Relief for bodily deficiency has come in the (words of the) Qur'án—*it is no crime in the blind man*

Lightning is transient and very faithless without clearness (of mind) you will not know the transient from the permanent

The lightning laughs say, at whom is it laughing? At him that sets his heart upon its light

The lights of the sky are hamstrung (feeble and imperfect) how are they like (that Light which is) neither of the east nor of the west?

1545 Regard the lightning as (what) *taketh away the sight*, regard

[1] Reading کِی گزافه If کَیْ be retained, translate "When did he the fool) in his vanity sit on such a throne?"

the everlasting Light as entirely Helpers[1] (to the attainment of vision)

To ride (your) horse upon the foam of the sea, to read a letter in a flash of lightning,

Is, to fail, because of covetousness, to see the end, it is, to laugh at your own mind and intellect

Intellect, by its proper nature, is a seer of the end (consequence), 'tis the fleshly soul that does not see the end

The intellect that is vanquished by the flesh becomes the flesh Jupiter is checkmated by Saturn and becomes inauspicious

Still, turn this gaze (of yours) upon this inauspiciousness, look 1550
on that One who made you ill-starred

The gaze (of him) that surveys this ebb and flow pierces from the inauspicious influence to the auspicious

He (God) continually turns you from one state (of feeling) to another, manifesting opposite by means of opposite in the change,

For the purpose that fear of the left hand side may bring to birth in you the delight of "the (blessed) men are led to hope for the right hand side,"

So that you may have two wings (fear and hope), for the bird that has (only) one wing is unable to fly, O excellent (reader)

(O God), either let me not come to speech (at all), or give me 1555
leave to tell (the whole) to the end

But if Thou willest neither this nor that, 'tis Thine to command how should any one know what Thou intendest[2]?

One must needs have the spirit of Abraham to see in the fire Paradise and its palaces by the light (of mystic knowledge),

And mount step by step above the moon and the sun, lest he remain like the door-ring fastened on the door,

And, like the Friend[3], pass beyond the Seventh Heaven, saying, "*I love not them that set*"

This bodily world is deceptive, save to him that has escaped 1560
from lust

Conclusion of (the story) how the (other) retainers envied the King's favourite slave

The story of the King and the amirs and their envy of the favourite slave and lord of wisdom

Has been left far (behind) on account of the powerful attraction of the discourse (Now) we must turn back and conclude it

The happy and fortunate gardener of the (Divine) kingdom—how should not he know one tree from another?

[1] "Helpers" (*Anṣár*) is the name given to the people of Medina who assisted Mohammed after he had quitted Mecca

[2] Literally, "where is Thy destination"

[3] Abraham

The tree that is bitter and reprobate, and the tree whose one is (as) seven hundred (of the other)—

1565 How, in rearing (them), should he deem (them) equal, when he beholds them with the eye (that is conscious) of the end,

(And knows) what (different) fruit those trees will ultimately bear, though at this moment they are alike in appearance[1]?

The Shaykh who has become seeing by the light of God has become acquainted with the end and the beginning

He has shut for God's sake the eye that sees the stable (the world), he has opened, in priority, the eye that sees the end

Those envious ones were bad trees, they were ill-fortuned ones of bitter stock

1570 They were boiling and foaming with envy, and were starting plots in secret,

That they might behead the favourite slave and tear up his root from the world,

(But) how should he perish, since the King was his soul, and his root was under the protection of God?

The King had become aware of those secret thoughts, (but) like Bú Bakr-i Rabábí he kept silence

In (viewing) the spectacle of the hearts of (those) evil-natured ones he was clapping his hands (derisively) at those potters (schemers)

1575 Some cunning people devise stratagems to get the King into a beer-jug[2],

(But) a King (so) exceedingly grand and illimitable—how should He be contained in a beer-jug, O asses?

They knitted a net for the King, (yet) after all, they (had) learned this contrivance from Him

Ill-starred is the pupil that begins rivalry with his master and comes forward (to contend with him)

With what master? The master of the world, to whom the manifest and the occult are alike,

1580 Whose eyes have become *seeing by the light of God* and have rent the veils of ignorance

(Making) a veil of (his) heart, (which is as) full of holes as an old blanket, he (the disciple) puts it on in the presence of that Sage

The veil laughs at him with a hundred mouths, every mouth having become a slit (open) to that (master)[3]

The master says to the disciple, "O you who are less than a dog, have you no faithfulness to me?

Even suppose I am not a master and an iron-breaker[4], suppose I am a disciple like yourself and blind of heart,

[1] Literally, "alike in the sight" [2] *I e* "to entrap and deceive him"
[3] Possibly the true reading is اشکافی بران, "(velut) rima in femore" (cf I 1230) *i e* every mouth exposes the disciple's folly and puts him to shame
[4] *I e* "one endowed with great spiritual power"

Have not you help in spirit and mind from me? Without me no water is set flowing for you

Therefore my heart is the factory of your fortune why would you break this factory, O unrighteous one?"

You may say that you kindle the flame[1] (of rivalry) against him in secret (not openly), but is there not a window between heart and heart?

After all, he sees your thought through the window your heart gives testimony as to what you are meditating

Suppose that, from kindness, he does not rebuke you to your face, (and that) whatever you say, he smiles and says "Yes"—

He does not smile from pleasure at your stroking (flattering him), he smiles at that (concealed) thought of yours

So a deceit is paid with a deceit strike with a cup, (and you) get struck with a jug—serve you right!

Were his smile at you one of approval, hundreds of thousands of flowers would blossom for you

When his heart works (for you) in approval, deem it (to be) a sun entering Aries,

Because of whom[2] both the day and the spring smile, and blossoms and green fields are mingled together,

And myriads of nightingales and ringdoves pour their song into the unplenished world

When you see the leaves of your spirit yellow and black, how know you not the anger of the King?

The King's sun, in the (zodiacal) sign of reproach, makes faces black as a piece of roasted meat

Our souls are leaves for that Mercury (to write on) that white and black (writing) is our standard (criterion)

Again, he writes a patent in red and green, that (our) spirits may be delivered from melancholy and despair

Red and green are Spring's cancellation (of winter), in regard (to their significance they are) like the (coloured) lines of the rainbow

How reverence for the message of Solomon, on whom be peace, was reflected in the heart of Bilqís from the despicable form of the hoopoe

Hundredfold mercy be on that Bilqís to whom God gave the intellect of a hundred men!

A hoopoe brought the letter with the (royal) sign-manual from Solomon—a few eloquent words

(When) she read those pregnant sayings, she did not look with contempt on the messenger

[1] Literally, "strike the fire-stick"
[2] Literally, "from it"

Her eye saw him as a hoopoe, (but) her spirit saw him as the 'Anqá, her senses saw him as a fleck of foam, (but) her heart saw him as the sea

1605 Because of these two-coloured (diverse) talismans (appearance and reality) the intellect is at war with the senses, as Mohammed with the likes of Abú Jahl

The infidels regarded Ahmad (Mohammed) as (only) a man, since they did not see in him (the Prophetic nature which was manifested by the miracle) *the moon was cleft asunder*

Throw dust on your sense-perceiving eye the sensuous eye is the enemy of intellect and religion

God has called the sensuous eye blind, He has said that it is an idolater and our foe,

Because it saw the foam and not the sea, because it saw the present and not to-morrow

1610 The master of to-morrow and of the present (is) before it, (yet) of a (whole) treasure it sees not (even) a groat[1]

(If) a mote bring a message from yonder Sun, the sun would become a slave to that mote

The drop that has become an envoy from the Sea of Unity—the seven seas would be captive to that drop

If a handful of earth become His courier, His heavens will lay their heads (in homage) before His earth

When the earth of Adam became God's courier, God's angels laid their heads (in worship) before His earth

1615 Wherefore (was it), pray, that *heaven was rent asunder*? Because of one (spiritual) eye that an earthly creature opened

Earth, from its grossness, settles beneath water, (but) see how earth has sped beyond the empyrean!

Know, then, that the subtlety (of water) is not (derived) from the water 'tis only the gift of the Bounteous Originator

If He make air and fire low (in place), and if He let the thorn surpass the rose,

He is the Ruler and (the One who said) *God doeth what He willeth* from the very self of pain He raises the remedy

1620 If He make air and fire low (in place), and make (them assume the qualities of) darkness and grossness and heaviness,

And if He make earth and water high (in place), and make the path of heaven (to be) traversed by foot—

Then it has become certain that *Thou exaltest whomso Thou wilt* He (God) said to an earthly creature, "Unfold thy wings"

To the creature of fire He said, "Go, become Iblís begone under the Seventh Earth with (thy) imposture!

O earthly Adam, go thou above (the star) Suhá, O fiery Iblís, go to (the bottom of) the Earth

[1] Literally "a *tasu* (equivalent to two or four barley-corns)"

I am not the four temperaments or the first cause, I am ever remaining in (absolute) control

My action is uncaused and upright (independent) I have (the power of) pre-determination, (I have) no cause, O infirm one

I alter My custom at the time (I choose) at the time (I will) I lay the dust (that rises) in front

I say to the sea, 'Hark, be full of fire!' I say to the fire, 'Go, be a rose-garden!'

I say to the mountain, 'Be light as wool!' I say to heaven, 'Be rent asunder before the eye!'

I say, 'O sun, be joined to the moon!' I make them both like two black clouds

We make dry the fountain of the sun by Our art We turn into musk the fountain of blood "

Sun and moon (shall be) like two black oxen God will fasten a yoke upon their necks

How a philosopher showed disbelief at the recitation of (the text), "if your water shall have sunk into the ground "

A teacher of Qur'án-recitation was reading from the page of the Book, "*(if) your water (shall have) sunk into the ground* (that is, if) I stop the water from (reaching) the spring,

And hide the water in the depths, and make the springs dry and a place of drought,

Who shall bring the water to the spring again except Me who have no like, the Gracious, the Glorious?"

A contemptible philosopher and logician was passing beside the school at that moment

When he heard the verse (of the Qur'án), he said in disapproval, "We bring the water (back) with a mattock,

With strokes of the spade and (with) the sharpness of the axe we bring the water up from below "

At night he fell asleep and saw (in dream) a lion-hearted man (who) gave (him) a blow on the face and blinded both his eyes,

And said, "O wretch, if you are speaking the truth, bring up some light with an axe from these two springs of vision "

At (dawn of) day he jumped up and found (he had) two blind eyes from both his eyes the overflowing light had vanished

If he had moaned and asked pardon (of God), the departed light would have appeared (again) through (God's) kindness,

But (the power of) asking pardon, also, is not in (our) hands the savour of repentance is not the dessert of every inebriate

The wickedness of (his) actions and the disastrousness of (his) denial (of the Truth) had barred the way of repentance to his heart

1645 His heart became in hardness as the face of a rock how should repentance cleave it for sowing?

Where is one like Shu'ayb, that by prayer he may make the mountain earth (fit) for sowing?

Through the supplication and (firm) belief of that Friend (Abraham) the thing that was hard and impossible became possible

Or, (to give another example), through the Muqawqis' begging the Prophet a stony ground became a goodly[1] cornfield

So, contrariwise, a man's disbelief turns gold into copper and peace into war

1650 This falseness draws after it[2] an evil transformation it turns ground capable (of tillage) into stones and pebbles

Nor is it granted to every heart to fall down in prayer the wages of (Divine) mercy are not the (allotted) portion of every hireling

Beware! Do not commit crime and sin in reliance on (the thought), "I will repent and come to (take) refuge (with God)"

For (true) repentance, there must needs be a glow (of inward feeling) and a flood (of tears) (such) lightning and clouds are the condition indispensable to repentance

There must needs be fire and water (rain) for the fruit clouds and lightning are necessary for this accomplishment

1655 Until there is the lightning of the heart and the rain-clouds of the two eyes, how shall the fire of (Divine) menace and wrath be allayed?

How shall the herbage grow, (the herbage) of the delight of union (with God)? How shall the fountains of clear water gush forth?

How shall the rose-beds tell their secret to the garden? How shall the violet make an engagement with the jasmine?

How shall a plane-tree open its hands (spread its leaves) in prayer? How shall any tree toss its head in the air (of love-desire)?

How shall the blossoms begin to shake out their sleeves full of largesse in the days of Spring?

1660 How shall the cheeks of the anemone flame like blood? How shall the rose bring gold out of its purse?

How shall the nightingale come and smell the rose? How shall the dove say "coo, coo[3]," as one that seeks?

How shall the stork utter with (all) its soul the cry *lak, lak*? What is (the meaning of) *lak*? (It means) "Thine[4] is the kingdom, O Thou whose help is invoked"

[1] Literally, "with capital qualities"

[2] Literally, "becomes the amber attracting," i e "becomes the means of producing"

[3] *Ku ku* in Persian means "where, where?"

[4] This is the meaning of *lak* in Arabic

How shall the earth show forth the secrets of its inmost mind? How shall the garden become radiant as the sky?

Whence have they fetched those garments (fair qualities)? (They have derived) all of them from One who is Bounteous and Merciful

Those graces are the signs of a Witness[1] they are the foot- 1665
prints of a man devoted to (God's) service

(None but) that person that has seen the King is gladdened by the sign, when one has not seen Him, there is no recognition

The spirit of that one who at the time of *Am not I* (*your Lord*)? saw his Lord and became beside himself and intoxicated—

He (that spirit) knows the scent of the wine because he drank it (before), when he has not drunk it, he cannot scent it

For Wisdom is like a stray camel like a go-between, it guides (those who find and recognise it) to (the presence of) kings

You behold in dream a person of pleasing countenance, who 1670
gives you a promise and a sign

That your desire will come to pass, here is the sign—such and such a person will meet you to-morrow

One sign is that he will be riding, one sign is that he will clasp you to his breast,

One sign is that he will smile before you, one sign is that he will fold his hands in your presence,

One sign is that when the morrow comes you will not tell this dream to any one, though you would fain do so[2]

Concerning that (last-mentioned) sign, He (God) said to the 1675
father of Yahyá (John the Baptist), "Thou shalt not begin to speak at all till three days (have passed)

For three nights keep silence as to thy good and ill[3] this will be the sign that Yahyá will come (be born) to thee

During three days do not breathe a word[4], for this silence is the sign of (the fulfilment) of thy purpose

Beware! do not thou speak of[5] this sign, and keep this matter hidden in thy heart"

He (the person dreamed of) will sweetly[6] tell these signs to him (the dreamer) What are these signs (alone)? (He will tell him) a hundred signs besides

This (which follows) is the sign that you will gain from God 1680
the (spiritual) kingdom and power that you are seeking—

That you weep continually in the long nights, and that you are always ardent in supplication at the hour of dawn,

That, in the absence of that (which you seek), your day has become dark, (that) your neck has become thin as a spindle,

[1] *I e* a saint who is the representative of God
[2] Literally, "you will not from desire tell this dream"
[3] *I e* "all that happens to thee"
[4] Literally, "do not breathe in speaking"
[5] Literally, "bring to speech"
[6] Literally, "like sugar"

And what you have given in alms (is) all that you possess, (so that) your belongings (are entirely bestowed in charity) like the alms of those who gamble all away[1],

(That) you have given up your belongings and sleep and the (healthy) colour of your face, and sacrificed your head (life) and become as (thin as) a hair,

(That) you have sat—how often!—in the fire, like aloes-wood, that you have gone—how often!—to meet the sword, like a helmet

A hundred thousand such acts of helplessness are habitual to lovers (of God), and (their number) cannot be reckoned

After you have had this dream at night, the day breaks, through hope thereof[2] your day becomes triumphant

You have turned your eye to left and right, (wondering) where is that sign and those tokens

You are trembling like a leaf (and saying), "Alas, if the day depart and the sign come not to pass!"

You are running in street and market and into houses, like one that should lose a calf

(Somebody asks), "Is it good (news), Sir? Why are you running to and fro? Who belonging to you is it that you have lost here?"

"It is good (news)," you tell him, "but none may know my good (news) except myself

If I tell it, lo, my sign is missed, and when the sign is missed, the hour of death is come"

You peer into the face of every rider he says to you, "Do not look at me like a madman"

You say to him, "I have lost a friend, I have set out[3] to seek him

May thy fortune be lasting, O rider! Have pity on lovers and excuse (them)"

When you have made search (and your) looking has been in earnest—earnest endeavour does not fail so the Tradition has come down (from the Prophet)—

Suddenly comes a blessed rider, then he clasps you very closely to his breast

You become senseless and fall to vaunting (ecstatically), the ignorant (uninitiated) man says, "Here is fraud and hypocrisy"

How does he see what this enthusiasm in him (the enraptured person) is? He knows not (who it is) with whom that is the sign of union

This sign concerns (only) him that has seen (before) how should the sign appear to the other one?

[1] *I e* the Ṣufis who sacrifice everything for God's sake
[2] *I e* of seeing the signs announced in the dream
[3] Literally, 'I have set my face'

Every moment that a sign was coming from Him, a (new) spirit was coming into that person's spirit

Water has reached the helpless fish These signs are (those mentioned in the text) *those are the signs of the Book*

Hence the signs which are in the prophets are peculiar to (known exclusively by) him who is a friend (knower and lover of God)

This discourse remains imperfect and unsettled, I have no 1705
heart (understanding) I am out of my mind[1] excuse me

How can any one number the motes, especially that one whose understanding has been transported by Love?

Shall I number the leaves of the garden? Shall I number the cries of the partridge and the crow?

They come not into computation, but I enumerate them for the guidance of him that is put to trial

The sinister influence of Saturn and the auspicious influence of Jupiter come not into computation, though you may enumerate,

But still, some of these two (diverse) effects must be ex- 1710
plained—that is, the benefit and injury (which they involve)—

In order that some little part of the effects of the (Divine) decree may be made known to the good-fortuned and the ill-starred

He whose ascendant (ruling planet) is Jupiter will be rejoiced by vivacity (of disposition) and eminence,

And it will be necessary for him whose ascendant is Saturn to take precautions against every (kind of) mischief in his affairs

If I should speak to one whose (ruling) planet is Saturn of his (Saturn's) fire, it (my discourse) would burn (torment) that hapless man

Our King (God) has given permission, (saying), "*Commem-* 1715
orate Allah" He saw us in the fire and gave us light

He has said, "Although I far transcend[2] your commemoration (of Me), (and although) the pictorial ideas (of human speech) are not suitable to Me,

Yet he that is intoxicated with (pictorial) imagination and fancy will never apprehend My essence without (the help of) similitude "

Bodily commemoration[3] is an imperfect fancy the Kingly attributes are remote from those (forms of speech)

If any one say of a king, "He is not a weaver," what praise is this? He (that person) is surely ignorant

[1] Literally, "I am without heart (mind) "
[2] Literally, "I am exempt from "
[3] *I e* praise and prayer uttered by the tongue

How Moses, on whom be peace, took offence at the prayer of the shepherd

1720 Moses saw a shepherd on the way, who was saying, "O God who choosest (whom Thou wilt),

Where art Thou, that I may become Thy servant and sew Thy shoes and comb Thy head?

That I may wash Thy clothes and kill Thy lice and bring milk to Thee, O worshipful One,

That I may kiss Thy little hand and rub Thy little foot, (and when) bedtime comes I may sweep Thy little room,

O Thou to whom all my goats be a sacrifice, O Thou in remembrance of whom are my cries of ay and ah!"

1725 The shepherd was speaking foolish words in this wise. Moses said, "Man, to whom is this (addressed)?"

He answered, "To that One who created us, by whom this earth and sky were brought to sight."

"Hark!" said Moses, "you have become very backsliding (depraved), indeed you have not become a Moslem, you have become an infidel.

What babble is this? what blasphemy and raving? Stuff some cotton into your mouth!

The stench of your blasphemy has made the (whole) world stinking: your blasphemy has turned the silk robe of religion into rags.

1730 Shoes and socks are fitting for you, (but) how are such things right for (One who is) a Sun?

If you do not stop your throat from (uttering) these words, a fire will come and burn up the people.

If a fire has not come, (then) what is this smoke? Why has your soul become black and your spirit rejected (by God)?

If you know that God is the Judge, how is it right for you (to indulge in) this doting talk and familiarity?

Truly, the friendship of a witless man is enmity: the high God is not in want of suchlike service.

1735 To whom are you saying this? To your paternal and maternal uncles? Are the body and (its) needs among the attributes of the Lord of glory?

(Only) he that is waxing and growing drinks milk: (only) he that has need of feet puts on shoes.

And if these words (of yours) are (meant) for His servant, of whom God said, 'He is I and I myself am he',

(For him) of whom He (God) said, 'Verily, I was sick and thou didst not visit Me,' (that is), 'I became ill, not he (the sick man) alone',

(For him) who has become seeing by Me and hearing by Me—

this (talk of yours) is foolish nonsense even in regard to that servant

To speak irreverently to one chosen of God causes the heart (spirit) to perish and keeps the page (record) black

If you should call a man 'Fátima'—though men and women are all of one kind—

He will seek to murder you, so far as it is possible (for him), albeit he is good-natured and forbearing and quiet

(The name) Fáṭima is (a term of) praise in regard to women, (but) if you address it to a man, 'tis (like) the blow of a spear-head

Hand and foot are (terms of) praise in relation to us, in relation to the holiness of God they are pollution

(The words) *He begat not, He was not begotten* are appropriate to Him He is the Creator of begetter and begotten

Birth is the attribute of everything that is (a) body whatever is born is on this side of the river,

Because it is of (the world of) becoming and decay and (is) contemptible it is originated and certainly requires an Originator"

He (the shepherd) said, "O Moses, thou hast closed my mouth and thou hast burned my soul with repentance"

He rent his garment and heaved a sigh, and hastily turned his head towards the desert and went (his way)

How the high God rebuked Moses, on whom be peace, on account of the shepherd

A revelation came to Moses from God—"Thou hast parted My servant from Me

Didst thou come (as a prophet) to unite, or didst thou come to sever?

So far as thou canst, do not set foot in separation of (all) things the most hateful to Me is divorce

I have bestowed on every one a (special) way of acting I have given to every one a (peculiar) form of expression

In regard to him it is (worthy of) praise, and in regard to thee it is (worthy of) blame in regard to him honey, and in regard to thee poison

I am independent of all purity and impurity, of all slothfulness and alacrity (in worshipping Me)

I did not ordain (Divine worship) that I might make any profit, nay, but that I might do a kindness to (My) servants

In the Hindoos the idiom[1] of Hind (India) is praiseworthy, in the Sindians the idiom of Sind is praiseworthy

[1] I e the local and traditional forms of speech used in the practice of eligion

I am not sanctified by their glorification (of Me), 'tis they that become sanctified and pearl-scattering (pure and radiant)

I look not at the tongue and the speech, I look at the inward (spirit) and the state (of feeling)

1760 I gaze into the heart (to see) whether it be lowly, though the words uttered be not lowly,

Because the heart is the substance, speech (only) the accident, so the accident is subservient, the substance is the (real) object

How much (more) of these phrases and conceptions and metaphors? I want burning, burning become friendly with that burning!

Light up a fire of love in thy soul, burn thought and expression entirely (away)!

O Moses, they that know the conventions are of one sort, they whose souls and spirits burn are of another sort "

1765 To lovers there is a burning (which consumes them) at every moment tax and tithe are not (imposed) on a ruined village

If he (the lover) speak faultily, do not call him faulty, and if he be bathed in blood, do not wash (those who are) martyrs

For martyrs, blood is better than water this fault (committed by him) is better than a hundred right actions (of another)

Within the Ka'ba the rule of the *qibla* does not exist what matter if the diver has no snow-shoes?

Do not seek guidance from the drunken why dost thou order those whose garments are rent in pieces to mend them?

1770 The religion of Love is apart from all religions for lovers, the (only) religion and creed is—God

If the ruby have not a seal (graven on it), 'tis no harm Love in the sea of sorrow is not sorrowful

How the (Divine) revelation came to Moses, on whom be peace, excusing that shepherd

After that, God hid in the inmost heart of Moses mysteries which cannot be spoken

Words were poured upon his heart vision and speech were mingled together

How oft did he become beside himself and how oft return to himself! How oft did he fly from eternity to everlastingness!

1775 If I should unfold (his tale) after this, 'tis foolishness (in me), because the explanation of this is beyond (our) understanding,

And if I should speak (thereof), 'twould root up (men's) minds, and if I should write (thereof), 'twould shatter many pens

When Moses heard these reproaches from God, he ran into the desert in quest of the shepherd

He pushed on over the footprints of the bewildered man, he scattered dust from the skirt of the desert[1]

The footstep of a man distraught is, in truth, distinct from the footsteps of others

(At) one step, (he moves) like the rook (straight) from top to bottom (of the chessboard), (at) one step he goes crossways, like the bishop,

Now lifting his crest like a wave, now going on his belly like a fish,

Now writing (a description of) his state on some dust, like a geomancer who takes an omen by drawing lines (on earth or sand)

At last he (Moses) overtook and beheld him, the giver of glad news said, "Permission has come (from God)

Do not seek any rules or method (of worship), say whatsoever your distressful heart desires

Your blasphemy is (the true) religion, and your religion is the light of the spirit you are saved, and through you a (whole) world is in salvation

O you who are made secure by *God doeth whatso He willeth*, go, loose your tongue without regard (for what you say)"

He said, "O Moses, I have passed beyond that I am now bathed in (my) heart's blood

I have passed beyond the Lote-tree of the farthest bourn, I have gone a hundred thousand years' journey on the other side

Thou didst ply the lash, and my horse shied, made a bound, and passed beyond the sky

May the Divine Nature be intimate with my human nature— blessings be on thy hand and on thine arm!

Now my state is beyond telling this which I am telling is not my (real) state"

You behold the image which is in a mirror it is your (own) image, it is not the image of the mirror

The breath which the flute-player puts into the flute—does it belong to the flute? No, it belongs to the man (the flute-player)

Take good heed! Whether you speak praise (of God) or thanksgiving, know that it is even as the unseemly (words) of that shepherd

Though your praise is better in comparison with that, yet in relation to God it too is maimed (feeble)

How often will you say, when the lid has been raised[2], "This was not what they were thinking (it was)!"

This acceptance (by God) of your praise is from (His) mercy it is an indulgence (which He grants), like (the indulgence

[1] I e he made great haste
[2] I e when you shall see things as they really are

granted in the case of) the prayers of a woman suffering from menorrhagia

Her prayers are stained with blood[1], your praise is stained with assimilation and qualification

Blood is foul, and (yet) it goes (is washed away) by a (little) water, but the inward part (the inner man) hath impurities

1800 Which fail not (are not removed) from the interior (the heart) of the man of works except by the water of the grace of the Maker

Would that in your bowing low in prayer you would turn your face (to attentive consideration) and apprehend the meaning of "Glory to my Lord!"

Saying, "Oh, my prostration (in prayer), like my existence, is unworthy (of Thee) do Thou give good in return for evil!"

This earth has the mark of God's clemency, in that it got filth and gave flowers as the produce,

In that it covers our pollutions, (and that) buds grow up from it in exchange

1805 Therefore, when the infidel saw that in giving and lavishing he was meaner and unwealthier than the earth,

(That) flowers and fruit did not grow from his being, (and that) he sought (and achieved) nothing but the corruption of all purities,

He said, "I have gone backwards in (my) course Alas! would that I had (still) been earth!

Would that I had not chosen to travel away from earthiness, (and that) like a clod of earth I had gathered some grain!

When I travelled, the Way tried me what was the present I brought (home) from this travelling?"

1810 'Tis from all that propensity of his towards earth that he sees before him no profit in the journey

His turning his face back is that greed and cupidity (of his), his turning his face to the Way is sincerity and supplication

Every herb that has a propensity for (moving) upwards is in (the state of) increase and life and growth,

When it has turned its head towards the earth, (it is) in (the state of) decrease and dryness and failure and disappointment

When the propensity of your spirit is upwards, (you are) in (the state of) increase, and that (lofty) place is the place to which you will return,

1815 But if you are upside down, (with) your head towards the earth, (then) you are one that sinks God loves not them that sink

[1] Literally "with her prayers blood is mixed so as to stain them"

How Moses, on whom be peace, asked the high God (to explain) the secret of the predominance of the unjust

Moses said, "O Bounteous Disposer, O Thou whom to commemorate for one moment is (worth) a long life,

I have seen the crooked, misshapen image in (the mould of) water and clay, and like the angels, my heart has raised an objection,

As to what is the purpose of making an image and casting therein the seed of corruption

To kindle the fire of iniquity and corruption, to burn the mosque and those who bend low in prayer,

To set boiling the source of bloody tears[1] for the sake of 1820
(receiving) humble entreaties (from the suffering and oppressed)–

I know for certain that it is the essence of wisdom (on Thy part), but my aim is (to know this by) actual seeing and vision

That certainty (of mine) says to me, 'keep silence', the craving for vision says to me, 'Make a stir (and outcry)'

Thou hast shown Thy secret to the angels, (namely) that such honey as this is worth the sting

Thou hast displayed the Light of Adam manifestly to the angels, (so that all) the difficulties were explained

Thy Resurrection declares what is the secret of death the 1825
fruits declare what is the secret of the leaves"

The secret of blood and seed is the excellence of Man, after all, inferiority is antecedent to every superiority

The ignorant (child) first washes the tablet, then he writes the letters upon it

(So) He (God) turns the heart into blood and abject tears, then He writes the (spiritual) mysteries upon it

At the time of washing the tablet (of the heart) one must recognise that it will be made into a book (of mysteries)

When they lay the foundation of a house (to rebuild it), they 1830
dig up the first foundation

(Also), people first fetch up clay from the depths of the earth in order that at last you may draw up *flowing water*

Children weep piteously at cupping, for they know not the secret of the matter,

(But) a man, in sooth, gives the cupper gold and fondles the blood-drinking lancet

The porter runs to the heavy load he snatches the load from others

Behold the struggle of the porters for the load! Such is the 1835
endeavour of him that sees (the truth of) things,

Inasmuch as burdens are the foundation of ease, and bitter things, too, are the forerunners of enjoyment

[1] Literally, "blood-stained and yellow water" The words may also be rendered, "serum and pus," *i e* festering wounds

Paradise is compassed about with the things we dislike (to do), the fires (of Hell) are compassed about with our lusts

The seed (source) of the substance of your fire (of torment) is the fresh bough (of lust), (but) he that is burned by the fire (of renunciation) is the comrade of Kawthar[1]

Whosoever is the comrade of affliction in prison—that is the retribution for a mouthful (of unlawful food) and a lust

1840 Whosoever is the comrade of a high fortune in a palace—that is the reward for some battle-field and sore trial

Whomsoever you have seen unrivalled in (his store of) gold and silver—know that he has been patient in earning

When the (spiritual) eye has become piercing, he (the owner) sees without causes You who are in (the bondage of) sense-perception, pay you heed to causes!

He whose spirit is beyond (the world of) natural properties—to him belongs the position of power to rive (the chain of) causes

The (spiritual) eye regards the fountain of the miracles of the prophets as (being) without cause, not as (arising) from water and herbage[2]

1845 These causes are (linked together) like the physician and the sick these causes are like the lamp and the wick

Twist a new wick for your night-lamp, (but) know that the lamp of the sun transcends these things

Go you and make plaster for the roof of your house, (but) know that the roof of the sky is undefiled by plaster

Alas that, after our Sweetheart had burned (utterly destroyed) our pain, the night-time of being alone (with Him) passed away and became day!

Except at night there is no unveiling of the moon except through heartache do not seek your heart's desire

1850 Forsaking Jesus, you have fostered the ass of necessity, like the ass, you are outside of the curtain

Knowledge and gnosis are the fortune of Jesus, they are not the fortune of the ass, O you asinine one!

You listen to the moaning of the ass, and pity comes over you, then you know not (that) the ass commands you to be asinine

Have pity on Jesus and have no pity on the ass do not make the (carnal) nature lord over your intellect

Let the (carnal) nature weep sore and bitterly do you take from it and pay the debt of the (rational) soul

1855 For years you have been the ass's slave It is enough, for the ass's slave is behind (even) the ass

The thing meant by (the Prophet's words) "put them (the women) behind" is your fleshly soul, for it must be last, and your intellect (must be) first

[1] A river in Paradise [2] *I e* not dependent on material causes

This base intellect has become of the same temperament as the ass its (only) thought is how it shall get hold of fodder

The ass of Jesus took (to itself) the temperament of the (rational) spirit it took its abode in the place of the intelligent,

Because (in Jesus) intellect was ruling, and the ass (was) weak —the ass is made lean by a strong rider—

While from the weakness of your intellect, O you who have (no more than) the value of an ass, this worn-out ass has become a dragon

If through Jesus (the spiritual guide) you have become heart-sick, (yet) health too comes from him do not leave him

How art thou as to affliction, O thou Jesus who hast the (healing) breath of Jesus? for there never was in the world a treasure without a snake

How art thou, O Jesus, at the sight of the Jews? How art thou, O Joseph, in respect of the envious plotter?

Night and day for the sake of this foolish people thou, like night and day, art a replenisher of life

Alas for those bilious ones who are without excellence! What excellence is born from bile? Headache

Do thou the same thing that the sun of the east does with (our) hypocrisy and craft and thieving and dissimulation

Thou art honey, we are vinegar in (the affairs of) this world and in religion, the (means of) removing this bile is oxymel

We folk who suffer from colic have added more and more vinegar, do thou add more and more honey, withhold not thy bounty

This was meet in us, such (acts naturally) issued from us what is increased by sand in the eye? Blindness

(But) 'tis meet in thee, O precious collyrium, that every nothing should gain from thee something

Thy heart is roasted by the fire of these unrighteous men, (yet) all thy appeal (to God) has been, "Guide my people!"

Thou art a mine of aloes-wood if they set thee afire, they will fill this world with otto of roses and sweet basil

Thou art not that aloes-wood that is minished by the fire thou art not that spirit that is made captive by grief

Aloes-wood burns, (but) the mine of aloes-wood is far from burning how should the wind (of evil words) assail the source of (spiritual) light?

Oh, 'tis from thee the heavens have (their) purity, oh, thy unkindness is better than kindness,

Because if an unkindness come from the wise it is better than the kindness of the ignorant

The Prophet said, "Enmity (proceeding) from wisdom is better than the love that comes from a fool"

How an Amír harassed a sleeping man into whose mouth a snake had gone

A wise man was riding along (at the moment when) a snake was going into the mouth of a man asleep

The rider saw that, and was hurrying to scare away the snake, (but) he got no chance (of doing so)

1880 Since he had an abundant supply of intelligence, he struck the sleeper several powerful blows with a mace

The strokes of the hard mace drove him in flight from him (the rider) to beneath a tree

There were many rotten apples which had dropped (from the tree) he said, "Eat of these, O you in the grip of pain!"

He gave the man so many apples to eat that they were falling out of his mouth again

He was crying, "O Amír, pray, why have you set on me? What have I done to you?

1885 If you have an inveterate and mortal feud with me[1], strike with your sword and shed my blood at once

Ill-omened (was) the hour I came into your sight oh, happy he[2] that never saw your face!

Without guilt, without sin, without (having done) anything great or small[3]—(even) the heretics hold not such oppression allowable

Blood gushes from my mouth together with (my) words O God, I beseech Thee, give him the retribution (which he deserves)!"

Every instant he was uttering a new curse, (while) he (the rider) kept beating him and saying, "Run in this plain"

1890 Blows of the mace, and the rider (swift) as the wind! He (therefore) went on running and (now and) again falling on his face

He was full-fed and sleepy and fatigued his feet and face became (covered with) a hundred thousand wounds

Till nightfall he (the rider) drove (him) to and fro[4], until vomiting caused by bile overtook him

All the things he had eaten, bad or good, came up from him the snake shot forth from him along with what he had eaten

When he saw the snake outside of him, he fell on his knees before that beneficent man

1895 As soon as he saw the horror of that black, ugly, big snake, those griefs departed from him

[1] Literally, "if you have from the beginning a quarrel with my soul (life)

[2] Literally "happiness to him"

[3] Literally "without more or less"

[4] Literally "drew him in and let him out"

"Truly," said he, "you are the Gabriel of (Divine) mercy, or you are God, for you are the lord of bounty.

Oh, blest (is) the hour that you saw me I was dead, you have given me new life

You (were) seeking me like mothers (in search of their children), I (was) fleeing from you like asses

The ass flees from his master because of asininity, his owner (runs) after (him) because of good-nature

He seeks him, not on account of profit or loss, but in order that a wolf or (other) wild beast may not tear him

Oh, happy he that espies your face or suddenly lights upon your abode

O you whom the pure spirit hath praised, how many foolish and idle words have I spoken to you!

O lord and emperor and amír, I spoke not, my folly spoke do not punish that (offence)

If I had known a tittle of this matter, how could I have spoken foolish words?

I should have spoken much praise of you, O man of good qualities, if you had given me a single hint as to the (actual) case,

But you, keeping silence, showed perturbation and silently continued to beat me on the head

My head became dizzy, the wits flew out of my head—especially as this head has (but) little brain

Pardon, O man of goodly countenance and goodly behaviour let pass that which I said in frenzy"

He answered, "If I had uttered a hint of it, your gall would instantly have turned to water

Had I told you the qualities of the snake, terror would have made you give up the ghost[1]"

Mustafa (Mohammed) said, 'If I should tell aright the description of the enemy which is in your souls,

The gall-bladders even of courageous men would burst he (such a one) would neither go his way nor care for any work

Neither would there remain to his heart endurance in supplication, nor to his body strength for fasting and (ritual) prayer

He would become (good for) nothing as a mouse before a cat, he would be distraught as a lamb before a wolf

No power to plan or move would remain in him therefore I tend you without speaking

I am mute, like Bu Bakr-i Rabábí, I handle the iron, like David,

So that by my hand the (seemingly) impossible is brought to pass[2], and wings are restored to the bird whose plumes were torn away

[1] Literally, "would have fetched up the breath from your soul"

[2] Literally, "becomes a state (of actuality)"

Since there is (the text) *the hand of God is above their hands*, the One (God) has declared our hand to be His hand

Therefore mine is surely a long hand that has passed beyond the Seventh Heaven

1920 My hand showed (its) cunning upon the sky O teacher of the Qur'án, recite *the moon hath been cleft asunder* '

This characteristic[1], moreover, is on account of the weakness of (men's) understandings how is it possible to explain the (Divine) omnipotence to the weak?

You will surely know when you lift your head from (this sensuous) sleep 'Tis the end (of my discourse), and God knows best what is right

"(If I had told you about the snake), you would not have been able to eat, nor would you have been capable of vomiting or cared (to do so)[2]

I heard (your) abuse and went on with my work[3], I kept repeating under my lip (breath), 'O Lord, make (it) easy!'

1925 I had not permission to speak of the cause, and I had not power to abandon you

From the grief in my heart I was saying continually, 'Guide my people, verily, they know not' "

The man that had been delivered from woe was falling on his knees and saying, "O (thou who art) my bliss, O my fortune and treasure,

Thou wilt get rewards from God, O noble one, this weakling has not the power to thank thee

God will say thanks to thee, O leader, I have not the lips and the chin and the voice for that "

1930 Of this fashion is the enmity of the wise their poison is gladness to the soul

The friendship of the fool is woe and perdition hear this tale as a parable

On putting trust in the fawningness and good faith of the bear

A dragon was pulling a bear (into its jaws), a valiant man went and succoured it

The valiant (holy) men are a help in the world when the wail of the oppressed reaches (them)

From every quarter they hear the cry of the oppressed and run in that direction, like the mercy of God

1935 Those buttresses for the breaches of the world, those physicians for hidden maladies,

Are pure love and justice and mercy, even as God, they are flawless (incorruptible) and unbribed

[1] Silence

[2] Literally "nor would you have had the way (means) or care to vomit "

[3] Literally, ' I was driving my ass along "

(If you ask one of them), "Why dost thou give him this aid all at once?" he says, "On account of his grief and helplessness"

Lovingkindness is fallen a prey to the valiant (holy) man, (for) medicine seeks naught in the world but the pain (which it should cure)

Wherever a pain is, the remedy goes there wherever a lowland is, the water runs there

If thou want the water of mercy, go, become lowly, and then drink the wine of mercy and become drunken

Mercy upon mercy comes (and rises like a flood) up to the head, do not thou come down to (and dwell upon) a single mercy, O son!

Bring the sky under thy feet, O brave one! Hear from above the firmament the noise of the (celestial) music!

Put out of thine ear the cotton of evil suggestion, that the cries from heaven may come into thine ear

Purge thy two eyes from the hair of defect, that thou mayst behold the garden and cypress-plot of the world unseen

Eject the phlegm from thy brain and nose, that the wind of God may come into the centres of thy (spiritual) sense of smell

Do not leave (in thyself) any trace of fever and bile, that thou mayst get from the world the taste of sugar

Remedium virilitatis adhibe neu virilitate carens cucurreris, that a hundred kinds of fair ones may come forth

Tear the fetter, which is the body, from the foot of thy soul, so that it may race round the arena

Take off the shackle of avarice from thy hands and neck seize (and enjoy) a new fortune in the old heaven

And if thou art unable (to do that), fly to the Ka'ba of (Divine) grace lay thy helplessness before the Helper

Lamentation and weeping are a mighty stock-in-trade (resource), the Universal Mercy is the mightiest nurse (to comfort and cherish)

The nurse and mother seeks a pretext (for giving relief) (she waits to see) when her child will begin to weep

He (God) created the child, (namely) your wants, in order that it might moan and that milk might (then) be produced for it

He said, "*Call ye upon God!*" Refrain not thou from lamentation, in order that the milk of His lovingkindnesses may flow

The howling of the wind and the pouring forth of (rain like) milk from the cloud are for care of us (have) patience one moment!

Hast not thou heard (the text) "*in the sky is your daily bread*"? Wherefore hast thou stuck to this low place?

Deem thy fear and despair to be the voice of the ghoul drawing thine ear (down) to the abyss of degradation

Every call that draws thee upward—know that that call has come from on high

Every call that excites cupidity in thee—know that it is the howl of the wolf which tears men (to pieces)

1960 This (afore-mentioned) height is not (high) in respect of position, these "heights" are towards (refer to) mind and spirit

Every cause is higher than the effect the stone and iron (from which fire is struck) are superior to the sparks

Such and such a person is (really) seated above that one who lifts up his head so haughtily, though in appearance he is seated beside him

The superiority of that (person's) place is in respect of (his spiritual) nobility, the place (that is) far from the (spiritual) seat of honour is held in slight regard

Forasmuch as the stone and iron are prior in action, the superiority of these twain is proper,

1965 But those sparks, in respect of their being the final cause[1], are from this point of view far in front of (superior to) the iron and stone

The stone and iron are first, and the sparks last, but these twain are the body, and the sparks are the soul

If those sparks are posterior in time, (yet) in quality they are higher than the stone and iron

The bough is prior to the fruit in time, (but) it (the fruit) is superior to the bough in excellence

Since the fruit is the final cause of the tree, it follows that the fruit is (really) first, the tree last

1970 When the bear cried out for help against the dragon, a valiant man rescued it from the (dragon's) claws

Cunning and courage gave support to each other by this strength he slew the dragon

The dragon has strength, (but) it has not cunning, again, there is a cunning above your cunning

When you have regarded your own cunning, go back (and see) whence it came go to the origin

Whatever is below has come from above come on, turn your eye towards the height

1975 Looking aloft gives light, though at first it produces dazzlement as a trial

Accustom your eye to the light, if you are not a bat, look in that direction

Vision of the end is the sign of your (having the) light, the lust of the moment is in truth your (dark) grave

The man with vision of the end, who has seen a hundred artifices, is not like him that has (only) heard of one artifice,

[1] Literally, "the object aimed at"

(And who) has been so befooled by that one artifice that in his pride he has become alienated from the masters

Like Sámirí, when he has seen in himself that (little) skill, through pride he has rebelled against (a) Moses

He has learned that skill from (a) Moses and (then) closed his eyes to his teacher

Moses, of course, exhibited another artifice, so that it swept away (both) that artifice (of Sámirí) and his life

Oh, many is the knowledge (talent) that runs in the head (and urges) that he (the owner) should become eminent—in truth, through that (knowledge) his head goes (he loses his life)

If you wish not your head to be lost, be (lowly as) a foot be under the protection of the Qutb who is possessed of discernment

Though you be a king, deem not yourself above him though you be honey, gather naught but his sugar-cane

Your thought is the outward form, and his thought is the soul your coin is false, and his coin is (pure as) the mine

You are (really) he seek yourself in his "he" (personality) Say coo, coo[1] become a dove (flying) towards him

And if you are unwilling to serve the (holy) men of (human) kind, you are in the dragon's mouth, like the bear

It may be that a Master will deliver you and pull you out of danger

As you have no strength, keep making a lamentation, since you are blind, take care, do not turn your head away from him that sees the road

You are less (worse) than the bear, (for) you are not wailing at the pain The bear was freed from pain when it made an outcry

O God, make our stony hearts (soft as) wax, make our wailing sweet (to Thee) and an object of (Thy) mercy!

How a sightless beggar said, "I have two blindnesses"

There was a blind man who used to say, "Pity! I have two blindnesses, O people of the time

Therefore, hark ye, show unto me twice as much compassion, since I have two blindnesses, and I (live) between (them)"

(Somebody) said, "We see one blindness of yours what may the other blindness be? Explain "

He answered, "I have an ugly voice and unpleasing tones ugliness of voice and blindness are double (blindness)

My ugly cry becomes the source of annoyance the people's love is lessened by my cry

[1] *Ku ku*, the cry of the dove, also means "where? where?"

Whithersoever my ugly voice goes, it becomes the source of anger and annoyance and hatred

Double your compassion for (these) two blindnesses make room (in your hearts) for one who gets so little room[1] "

2000 The ugliness of (his) voice was diminished by this plaint the people became of one mind in (showing) compassion for him

When he had told the secret (and explained his meaning), his voice was made beautiful by the graciousness of the voice of his heart,

But that one whose heart's voice also is bad—(for him) those three blindnesses are banishment everlasting (from the favour of God),

Yet it may be that the bounteous (saints), who give without cause, will lay a hand (of blessing) upon his ugly head

Since his (the blind beggar's) voice became sweet and pitiable[2], the hearts of the stony-hearted were made (soft) as wax thereby

2005 Inasmuch as the infidel's lament is ugly and (like) braying, for that (reason) it meets with no (favourable) response[3]

"*Be silent*" has come down (has been revealed in the Qur'án) against the ugly-voiced (infidel), for he was drunken with the people's blood, like a dog

Inasmuch as the lament of the bear attracts compassion, (while) your lament is not like this, (but) is unpleasing,

Know that you have behaved with wolfishness to (a) Joseph, or have drunk of the blood of an innocent

Repent, and empty yourself of what you have drunk, and if your wound is old (and unhealed), go, cauterise (it)

Continuation[4] of the story of the bear and of the fool who had put trust in its good faith

2010 The bear, too, when it was delivered from the dragon and received such kindness from that brave man—

Like the dog of the Men of the Cave, that poor bear became an attendant at the heels of him that bore the burden (of the fight with the dragon)

That Moslem, from fatigue, laid down his head (to rest), the bear, from devotion (to him), became (his) guard

A certain man passed by and said to him, "What has happened? O brother, who is this bear (in relation) to you?"

[1] Literally "cause one who is so uncontained (in your hearts) to be contained (in them)"

[2] Literally, "wronged" and hence apt to excite compassion

[3] Literally, "it does not become the companion of acceptance"

[4] Literally, "completion", but see the section beginning with v 2124

He recounted the adventure, and the story of the dragon The other said, "Do not set your heart on a bear, O fool!

The friendship of a fool is worse than (his) enmity it (the bear) ought to be driven away by every means you know"

He (the man with the bear) said (to himself), "By God, he has said this from envy, otherwise," (he said aloud), "why do you look at the bearishness (of the bear)? Behold this affection (which it has for me)!"

"The affection of fools," said the other, "is beguiling, this envy of mine is better than its (the bear's) affection

Hey, come with me and drive away this bear do not choose the bear (as your friend), do not forsake one of your own kind!"

"Go, go," said he, "mind your own business, O envious man!" Said the other, "This was my business, and it was not your fortune (to follow my advice)[1]

I am not less than a bear, O noble sir abandon it, in order that I may be your comrade

My heart is trembling with anxiety for you do not go into a forest with a bear like this

This heart of mine has never trembled in vain, this is the Light of God, not pretence or idle brag

I am the true believer who has become seeing by the Light of God Beware and beware! Flee from this fire-temple!"

He said all this, and it entered not his ear suspicion is a thick barrier to a man

He took his hand, and he (the man with the bear) withdrew his hand from him The other said, "I will go, since you are not a well-guided friend"

"Go," cried he, "be not troubled for me, don't carve (retail) so much wisdom, O meddlesome one!"

He answered him, (saying), "I am not your enemy it would be a kindness if you would come after me"

"I am sleepy," said he, "let me alone, go!" He replied, "Pray, give in to your friend,

So that you may sleep under the safeguard of a sage, under the protection of one loved (by God), a man of heart (spiritual insight)"

The man was thrown by his (the other's) earnestness into a (groundless) fancy he became angry and quickly averted his face,

Thinking, "Mayhap this man has come to attack me—he is a murderer, or he has hope (of gain)—he is a beggar and a tout,

Or he has wagered with his friends that he will make me afraid of this companion"

From the wickedness of his heart, not (even) one good surmise came into his thoughts at all

[1] Literally, "it was not your fore-ordained portion (*rizq*)"

His good opinions were wholly for the bear to be sure, he was of the same kind as the bear

2035 Through currishness, he suspected a sage and deemed a bear affectionate and just

How Moses, on whom be peace, said to one who worshipped the (golden) calf, "Where is (what has become of) thy vain scepticism and precaution[1]?"

Moses said to one drunken with (deluding) fancy, "O thou who thinkest evil because of (thy) unblessedness and perdition,

Thou hast had a hundred suspicions concerning my prophethood, notwithstanding these proofs and this noble nature (which I have shown)

Thou hast seen from me hundreds of thousands of miracles, (and all the time) a hundred fancies and doubts and (vain) opinions were growing in thee

Thou wert sorely pressed by fancy and devilish suggestion, thou wert sneering at my prophethood

2040 I raised up dust from the sea[2] before your eyes, so that ye might be delivered from the wickedness of the people of Pharaoh

During forty years the platter and tray (of food) came (to you) from heaven, and at my prayer the river ran from a rock

These (miracles) and a hundred times as many, and all these diverse[3] (evidences), did not make that vain imagination fade away from thee, O cold (hard-hearted) man!

Through sorcery a calf lowed, (then) thou didst fall to worship, saying, 'Thou art my God'

(Then) those imaginations were swept away (as) by a flood, and thy silly shrewdness went to sleep

2045 How wert not thou suspicious in regard to him (Sámirí)? Why didst thou lay thy head (on the ground) like that, O ugly one?

How did no idea come to thee of his imposition and of the corruptness of his fool-catching magic?

Who, indeed, is a Sámirí, O ye curs, that he should hew up a God[4] in the world?

How didst thou become of one mind (with him) as to this imposture of his, and become devoid of all perplexities?

Is a cow (calf) worthy to be deified on (the strength of) a

[1] *I e* "You regarded me as a false prophet and obstinately refused to believe in God why are you now so credulous as to worship an idol?"

[2] *I e* "I caused the sea to vanish"

[3] Literally, "hot and cold"

[4] *I e* set up a graven image as God

vain boast, (while there are) a hundred disputes as to the prophetic mission of one like me?

Through asinine dullness thou didst cast thyself down in worship before a cow (calf), thy understanding fell a prey to Sámirí's magic 2050

Thou didst steal thine eye away from the Light of the Glorious (God) here is plenteous folly for thee and the essence of perdition!

Fie upon such an understanding and (faculty of) choice as thou hast! 'Twere fitting to kill a mine of folly like thee

The golden calf uttered a cry, prithee, what did it say, that all this desire (for it) blossomed in the fools?

Ye have seen from me many a thing more wonderful than that, but how should every rascal accept God?"

What carries away (enraptures) worthless folk? Worthlessness What pleases futile folk? Futility, 2055

Because every kind is carried away (enraptured) by its own kind how should the ox turn its face towards the fierce lion?

How should the wolf bear love for Joseph, unless, perchance, through cunning, in order to devour him?

When it is delivered from wolfishness, it will become familiar (with him), like the dog of the Cave, it will become one of the sons of Adam

When Abu Bakr smelt (made his first acquaintance with) Mohammed, he said, "This is not a face that lies,"

(But) since Bú Jahl was not of those in sympathy (with Mohammed), he saw a hundred cleavings of the moon[1], and believed not 2060

The sorrowful (lover of God), whose bowl has fallen from the roof[2]—we (would) hide the Truth from him, (but) it does not become hid,

While he that is ignorant (of God) and a stranger to His sorrow (love)—how often has it been shown, and he has not seen it!

The mirror of the heart must be clear, in order that you may know therein the ugly form from the beautiful

How the man of sincere counsel, after having done his utmost in (the way of) admonition, took leave of him who was deluded by (his confidence in) the bear

That Moslem left the foolish man and quickly, saying *Lá hawl* under his lip (breath), went back (to his abode)

He said, "Inasmuch as from my earnestness in admonition 2065

[1] *I e* a hundred miracles like the famous miracle of the cleaving of the moon

[2] *I e* "who has fallen into ecstasy"

and from (my) disputing (with him), (the only result is that) vain fancies are being born in his mind more (and more),

Therefore the road of admonition and counsel has become barred the command, '*Turn aside from them*,' has arrived "

When your remedy increases the disease, then (leave him who will not be cured, and) tell your story to one that seeks (to hear the Truth) Read (the chapter of the Qur'án, which begins with the word) '*Abasa* (he frowned)

"As the blind man has come seeking the Truth[1], 'tis not meet to wound his breast (by turning aside from him) on account of his poverty

Thou (Mohammed) art eager for the great ones to take the right way, in order that the common folk may learn from the rulers

2070 O Ahmad (Mohammed), thou hast seen that a company of princes have become ready to listen (to thee), and thou art pleased (with the hope) that, maybe,

These chieftains will become good friends of the Religion (Islam), (for) they are lords over the Arabs and the Abyssinians,

(And that) the fame of this will pass beyond Basra and Tabúk, since 'people follow the religion of their kings '

For this cause thou hast averted thy face from the blind man that was led into the right way, and hast become vexed,

Saying (to him), 'This gathering (of strangers) seldom falls out so opportunely, (whereas) you are one of my friends, and your time is ample

2075 You are urgent with me at an inconvenient time I give you this admonition, (but) not in anger and strife '

O Ahmad, in the sight of God this one blind man is better than a hundred emperors and a hundred viziers

Take heed, remember (the adage), 'Men are mines ' one mine may be more than a hundred thousand

The mine of lurking ruby and cornelian is better than myriads of mines of copper

O Ahmad, here riches have no use, a breast is wanted, full of love and pain and sighs

2080 The blind man of enlightened heart is come do not shut the door, give him counsel, for counsel is his right

If two or three fools have disbelieved in thee, how shouldst thou be soured when thou art a mine of candy?

If two or three fools impute falsehood to thee, God is giving testimony on thy behalf "

He (Mohammed) said, "I am unconcerned with the acknowledgment of the world what care (for the world) hath he whose witness is God?

[1] Verses 2068–2082 are a free paraphrase of Qur'án, LXXX 1–10

If a bat receives anything agreeable (to it) from a sun, 'tis a proof that that (sun) is not the (real) sun

The disgust of the wretched bats is a proof that I am the shining glorious sun

If the beetle feels a desire for some (particular) rose-water, that constitutes a proof of its not being rose-water

If any false coin is eager for the touchstone, uncertainty and doubt enter into (the fact of) its being a touchstone

The thief wants night, not day—mark this! I am not night, I am day, for I shine throughout the world

I am discerning, I am exceedingly discriminating and sieve-like, so that the chaff finds no passage through me

I make the flour distinct from the bran, in order to show that this is the (external) forms, and that the (inward) souls (essences)

I am as the scales of God in the world I reveal (the difference of) every light thing from the heavy

A calf deems the cow God, the ass (deems God) one who is fond (of it) and that which accords with its desires[1]

I am not a cow, that the calf should be fond of me, I am not thistles, that a camel should browse on me

He (the unbeliever) supposes that he has done me an injury, nay, he has wiped away the dust from my mirror "

How the madman sought to ingratiate himself with Jálínús (Galen), and how Jálínus was afraid

Jálínús said to his companions, "Let (one of you) give me such-and-such a medicine "

Then said that person to him, "O master of (many) sciences, this medicine is sought (as a cure) for madness

Far be this from thy intellect! Say no more (about it) " He replied, "A madman turned his face to me,

Looked pleasantly on my face for a while, made little eyes at me, and plucked my sleeve

Had there not been in me congeniality with him, how would that ill-favoured man have turned his face towards me?

Had he not seen (in me) one of his own kind, how should he have approached? How should he have thrown himself upon (attached himself to) one of another kind?"

When two persons come into touch with each other, without any doubt there is something in common between them.

How should a bird fly except with its own kind? The society of the uncongenial is the grave and the tomb

[1] Literally, "suitable goods "

The cause of a bird's flying and feeding with a bird that is not of its own kind

Said a certain sage, "I saw a crow running about with a stork

I marvelled long[1], and I investigated their case, in order that I might find the clue (as to) what it was that they had in common[2]

When, amazed and bewildered, I approached them, (then) indeed I saw that both of them were lame "

In particular, (how should) a royal falcon, which is of the highest heaven, (consort) with an owl, which is of the low earth?

That one is the sun of 'Illiyyún, while the other is a bat which belongs to Sijjín

That one is a luminary, free from every defect, while this (other) one is a blind man begging at every door

That one is a moon that strikes (its beams) upon the Pleiades, while this (other) one is a worm that cleaves to dung

That one has the face of a Joseph, the breath of a Jesus, while this (other) one is a wolf or an ass with a bell

That one has flown to Spacelessness, while this (other) one is in the straw-barn, like the dogs

With the tongue of (unspoken) meaning the rose is saying to the beetle this—"O stinking (creature)[3],

If thou art fleeing from the rose-bed, doubtless that aversion (shown by thee) is (a sign of) the perfection of the rose-garden

My jealousy (sense of dignity) smites thee on the head with a baton, (warning thee to) keep far away from here, O vile one,

For if, base wretch, thou shouldst mix with me, it will be thought that thou art of my stock[4]

For nightingales the garden is the proper place, for the beetle the best home is in ordure "

Since God has kept me pure from filth, how were it seemly to appoint a foul one for (companionship with) me?

I had (in me) a vein of them (of their nature) He (God) cut it out how (then) will he with the vein of evil attain unto me?

One mark of Adam from eternity was this, that the angels should lay their heads (on the ground) before him, because it was his place (proper to his dignity)

Another mark was that Iblis, saying, "I am the king and chief," should not lay down his head before him

But if Iblis too had become a worshipper (of Adam), he (Adam) would not have been Adam he would have been another

At once the worship of every angel is the test[5] of him, and the denial (of him) by that enemy (Iblís) is the proof of him

[1] Literally, "I remained in astonishment "
[2] Literally, "what (was) the common quantity "
[3] Literally, "with stinking armpits " [4] Literally, "of my mine "
[5] Literally, "the balance (in which he is weighed) "

At once the acknowledgment (made) by the angels is witness for him, and the disbelief of that petty cur (Iblís) is witness for him

Conclusion of the (story concerning the) trust of that deluded man in the fawningness of the bear

The man fell asleep, and the bear kept driving the flies away, but in spite of him they soon came back again

Several times he drove them from the youth's face, but soon they came hurrying back once more 2125

The bear was enraged with the flies and went off He picked up a very big stone from the mountain-side

He fetched the stone, and saw the flies again settled comfortably[1] on the face of the sleeper

He took up that millstone and struck at the flies, in order that they might retire

The stone made powder[2] of the sleeping man's face, and published to the whole world this adage—

"The love of a fool is for sure the love of a bear his hate is love and his love is hate" 2130

His promise is infirm and corrupt and feeble, his word stout and his performance lean

Do not believe him, even if he take an oath the man whose speech is false will break his oath

Inasmuch as, without the oath, his word was a lie, do not be entrapped[3] by his deceit and oath

His fleshly soul is in command, and his intellect captive, even suppose that he has sworn on a hundred thousand Qur'áns,

(Yet), since without (taking) an oath he will break his pact— if he take an oath, he will break that too, 2135

Because the fleshly soul becomes (all) the more infuriated by your binding it with a heavy oath

When a captive[4] puts bonds upon a governor[5], the governor will burst them and leap out,

He will bang those bonds on his (the captive's) head in wrath, dashing the oath in his face

Wash your hands (give up hope) of his (obeying the Divine command), "*Fulfil your promises*", do not say to him, "*Keep your oaths*"

But he that knows to whom he (really) makes the promise will make his body (thin) as a thread and wind (himself) about Him 2140

[1] Literally, "having taken a place of comfort"
[2] Literally, "poppy-seeds"
[3] Literally, "do not fall into buttermilk"
[4] The intellect
[5] The fleshly soul

How Muṣṭafá (Mohammed), on whom be peace, went to visit the sick Companion, and an exposition of the profit of visiting the sick

A notable amongst the Companions (of Mohammed) fell ill, and in that illness of his became (thin) as a thread

Muṣṭafá went to visit him, since his (Muṣṭafá's) nature was all kindness and generosity

There is profit in your visiting the sick the profit thereof is returning to you again

The first profit is that the sick person may perchance be a Quṭb and a glorious (spiritual) king,

And if he be not a Qutb, he may be a friend of the (Súfí) Way, if he be not the king, he may be the cavalier of the host

Deem it, then, incumbent (on you) to attach yourselves to the friends of the Way, whosoever it may be, and whether (he be) footman or rider

And if he be a foe (to you), still this kindness is good, for by kindness many a foe hath been made a friend,

And though he do not become a friend, his enmity is lessened, because kindness becomes the balm for enmity

There are many profits besides these, but I am afraid of being tedious, good friend

The gist (of the matter) is this be the friend of the whole community (of Sufis) like the idol-maker, carve a friend out of the stone,

Because the throng and multitude of a caravan will break the backs and spears of the highwaymen

Inasmuch as you have not the heart's two eyes, O contumacious man, so that you cannot distinguish firewood from aloes-wood,

(You may despair of finding the true friend of God, but) since there exists a treasure in the world, do not grieve deem no ruined place empty of treasure

Betake yourself to every dervish at random, and when you find the mark (of the true saint), frequent (him) assiduously

As the inward-seeing eye was not (granted) to you, think always (that) the treasure (may be) in everybody

How the high God revealed to Moses, on whom be peace, (the words), "Wherefore didst not thou visit Me in sickness?"

To Moses there came from God this reproach "O thou who hast seen the rising of the moon from thy bosom,

Thou whom I have illumined with the Divine Light! I am God, I fell sick, thou camest not"

Moses said, "O Thou transcendent in Thy glory, Thou art clear of loss (defect) What mystery is this? Explain this, O Lord!"

God said unto him again, "Wherefore in My sickness didst not thou kindly ask after Me?"

He answered, "O Lord, Thou hast no imperfection (My) 2160
understanding is lost unfold (the meaning of) these words"

God said, "Yea, a favourite and chosen slave (of Mine) fell sick I am he Consider well!

His excusability (infirmity) is My excusability, his sickness is My sickness"

Whoever wishes to sit with God, let him sit in the presence of the saints

If you are broken off (divided) from the presence of the saints, you are in perdition, because you are a part without the whole

Whomsoever the Devil cuts off from the noble (saints), he 2165
finds him without any one (to help him), and he devours his head

To go for one moment a single span apart from the community (of saints) is (a result of) the Devil's guile Hearken, and know (it) well[1]

How the gardener isolated the Súfí, the jurist, and the descendant of 'Alí from one another

A gardener, when he looked into the orchard, saw three men in his orchard, as (though they were) thieves

A jurist and a Sharíf and a Súfí each one an impudent, knavish and perfidious rogue

He said, "I have a hundred arguments against these fellows, but they are united, and a united party is (a source of) strength

I cannot cope singly with three persons, so first I will sunder 2170
them from one another

I will isolate each one from the others, and when each is alone, I will tear out his moustache"

He employed a ruse and got the Súfí away, that he might poison[2] (the minds of) his friends against him

He said to the Súfí, "Go to the house and fetch a rug for these companions (of yours)"

(As soon as) the Súfí departed, he (the gardener) said in private to the two friends, "Thou art a jurist, and this (other) is a renowned Sharíf

'Tis according to thy legal decision that we eat a loaf (of 2175
bread) 'tis by the wings of thy knowledge that we fly

And this other is our prince and sovereign he is a Sayyid, he is of the House of Mustafá (Mohammed)

[1] Reading with A D Bul بشنو و نیکو بدان Cf the Introduction to Vol 1 p 9, note 1, where the number of the verse (۲۱۶۶) has been accidentally omitted

[2] Literally, "corrupt"

Who is this gluttonous vile Ṣúfí, that he should associate with kings like you?

When he comes (back), drive him away[1] and take possession of[2] my orchard and field for a week.

What is (it to offer you) my orchard? My life is yours, O ye who have (always) been (as dear to me) as my right eye."

2180 He made evil suggestions and beguiled them. Ah, one must not patiently suffer the loss of friends.

When they had turned the Súfí away and he was gone, the enemy went after him with a stout cudgel.

"O dog," he cried, "is it Súfism[3] that of a sudden you come into my orchard in spite (of me)?

Did Junayd or Báyazíd direct you to behave in this way? From what Shaykh and Pír did this (instruction) reach you?"

He beat the Sufí when he found him alone, he half killed him and cracked his head.

2185 Said the Súfí, "Mine is over, but O comrades, take good care of yourselves!

Ye regarded me as an alien. Look out! I am not more alien than this scoundrel.

That (cup) which I have drunk must be drunk by you, and such a draught as this is the due of every cad."

This world is (like) the mountain, and (all) thy words come back to thee from the echo.

After the gardener had finished with the Súfí, he invented a pretext of the same kind as the former,

2190 Saying, "O my Sharíf, go to the house, for I have baked (some) thin cakes of bread for breakfast.

At the house-door tell Qaymáz to fetch those cakes and the goose."

Having sent him off, he said (to the other), "O keen-sighted one, thou art a jurist, this is manifest and sure.

(But) he (thy friend) a Sharíf! 'Tis an absurd claim he is making. Who knows who committed adultery with his mother?

Will ye set your hearts (rely) on woman and the deeds of woman? (Will ye acknowledge her to be of) weak mind, and then (put) trust (in her)?

2195 He has tacked himself on to 'Alí and to the Prophet—and there is many a fool in the world (who will believe him)."

Whoever is (born) of adultery and (is one) of the adulterous will think this concerning the men of God.

Any one whose head is made giddy by (his own) gyrations sees the house turning round like himself.

What that vain talker, the gardener, said was (indicative of)

[1] Literally, "make cotton of him," "comb him out."
[2] Literally, "strike upon," "lay (hands) on."
[3] Read صوفیی

his (own) condition, (it was) far from (being applicable to) the descendants of the Prophet.

If he had not been the issue of apostates, how should he have spoken thus as regards (the Prophet's) House?

He used spells (guileful words), and the jurist hearkened to 2200
them. (Then) that insolent bully went after him (the Sharíf).

He said, "O ass, who invited you into this orchard? Has robbery been left to you as an inheritance by the Prophet?

The lion's cub resembles him (the lion): in what do you resemble the Prophet? Tell (me that)!"

The man (the gardener) who had sought refuge (in craft) did to the Sharíf that which a Khárijite would do to the Family of *Yá-sín* (Mohammed).

(I marvel) what hatred devils and ghouls like Yazíd and Shimr always have towards the Prophet's Family.

The Sharíf was devastated by the blows of that ruffian. He 2205
said to the jurist, "I have jumped out of the water.

Do thou stand fast, now that thou art left alone and deprived (of our support). Be as a drum, suffer blows on the belly!

If I am not a Sharíf and worthy (of thee) and a (true) bosom-friend, (at any rate) I am no worse for thee than such a ruffian as this."

He (the gardener) finished with him (the Sharíf), and came up, saying, "O jurist, what (sort of) jurist are you, O you disgrace to every fool?

Is it your legal opinion, O convicted thief[1], that you may come (into my orchard) without asking leave[2]?

Have you read such a license in the *Wasít*, or has this question 2210
been (so decided) in the *Muhíṭ*?"

"You are right," he replied, "beat (me): you have got the upper hand. This is the fit penalty for him that parts from friends."

Returning to the story of the sick man and the visit paid (to him) by the Prophet, God bless him and grant him peace!

This visiting of the sick is for the sake of this (spiritual) attachment[3], and this attachment is pregnant with a hundred lovingkindnesses.

The peerless Prophet went to visit the sick man; he found that Companion at the last gasp.

When you become far from the presence of the saints, you have in reality become far from God.

Inasmuch as the result of parting from fellow-travellers is 2215

[1] Literally, "one whose hand has been cut off."
[2] Literally, "without saying, 'Is it the command?'"
[3] See v. 2145.

sorrow, how is separation from the countenance of the kings (saints) less (grievous) than that?

Hasten every moment to seek the shadow (protection) of (those) kings, that by means of that shadow you may become superior to the sun

If you have a journey (to make), go with this intention, and if it be (that you stay) at home, neglect not this

How a certain Shaykh said to Báyazíd, "I am the Ka'ba perform a circumambulation round me"

Báyazíd, the Shaykh of the community, was hurrying to Mecca for the greater pilgrimage (*hajj*) and the lesser (*'umra*)

In every city to which he went he would at first make search after the venerable (saints)

He would roam about, asking, "Who is there in the city that is relying on[1] (spiritual) insight?"

God has said, "Whithersoever thou goest in thy travels, thou must first seek after a (holy) man"

Go in quest of a treasure, for (worldly) profit and loss come second regard them as the branch (not as the root)

Whoever sows is in quest of wheat, the chaff comes to him indeed, (but only) secondarily

If you sow chaff, no wheat will come up seek a man, seek a man, a man!

When it is the season of pilgrimage, go in quest of the Ka'ba, when you have gone (with that purpose), Mecca also will be seen

In the *Mi'raj* (Ascension of the Prophet) the quest was (for) vision of the Beloved, 'twas but secondarily that the empyrean and the angels were also shown

Story

A novice one day built a new house, the Pír came (and) saw his house

The Shaykh said to his new disciple—he put to the test him that had good thoughts—

"Wherefore hast thou made a window, O comrade?" Said he, "In order that light may come in by this way"

He (the Shaykh) said, "That is (only) the branch (secondary object), (thy) want (desire) must be this, (namely) that through this channel thou mayst hear the call to prayer"

Báyazíd, on his journey (to the Ka'ba), sought much to find some one that was the Khizr of his time

He espied an old man with a stature (bent) like the new moon, he saw in him the majesty and (lofty) speech of (holy) men,

[1] Literally, "supporting himself on the pillars of"

His eyes sightless, and his heart (illumined) as the sun like an elephant dreaming of Hindustán

With closed eyes, asleep, he beholds a hundred delights, when he opens (his eyes), he sees not those (delights)—oh, ('tis) wonderful!

Many a wonder is made manifest in sleep in sleep the heart 2235
becomes a window

One that is awake and dreams fair dreams, he is the knower (of God) smear your eyes with[1] his dust

He (Báyazíd) sat down before him and asked about his condition, he found him to be a dervish and also a family man

He (the old man) said, "Whither art thou bound, O Báyazíd? To what place wouldst thou take the baggage of travel in a strange land?"

Báyazíd answered, "I start for the Ka'ba at daybreak" "Eh," cried the other, "what hast thou as provisions for the road?"

"I have two hundred silver dirhems," said he, "look, (they 2240
are) tied fast in the corner of my cloak"

He said, "Make a circuit round me seven times, and reckon this (to be) better than the circumambulation (of the Ka'ba) in the pilgrimage,

And lay those dirhems before me, O generous one Know that thou hast made the greater pilgrimage and that thy desire has been achieved,

(That) thou hast (also) performed the lesser pilgrimage and gained the life everlasting, (that) thou hast become pure (*sáf*) and sped up (the Hill of) Purity (*Safá*)

By the truth of the Truth (God) whom thy soul hath seen, (I swear) that He hath chosen me above His House

Albeit the Ka'ba is the House of His religious service, my 2245
form too, in which I was created, is the House of His inmost consciousness

Never since God made the Ka'ba hath He gone into it, and none but the Living (God) hath ever gone into this House (of mine)

When thou hast seen me, thou hast seen God thou hast circled round the Ka'ba of Sincerity

To serve me is to obey and glorify God beware thou think not that God is separate from me

Open thine eyes well and look on me, that thou mayst behold the Light of God in man"

Báyazíd gave heed to those mystic sayings, and put them in 2250
his ear as a golden ring

Through him (the old man), Báyazíd came into an increase (of spiritual endowment) the adept at last attained unto the end.

[1] Literally, "draw into your eyes"

How the Prophet—God bless and save him!—perceived that the cause of that person's sickness was irreverence in prayer

When the Prophet saw the sick man, he dealt sweetly and tenderly with that familiar friend[1]

He became alive when he saw the Prophet you might say, that moment created him

He said, "Sickness has given me this good fortune, that this Sultan has come to my side at morn,

2255 So that health and well-being have accrued to me from the arrival of this King who is without retinue

O happy pain and sickness and fever! O blessed anguish and wakefulness in the night!

Lo, in (my) old age God of His grace and bounty hath bestowed on me such a sickness and malady!

He too hath given me pain in the back, so that every midnight I cannot help springing up quickly from sleep

In order that I may not slumber all night like a buffalo, God of His grace hath given me pains

2260 Through this infirmity the mercy of Kings has been aroused, and Hell's threatening of me has been silenced "

Pain is a treasure, for there are mercies in it the kernel becomes fresh when you scrape off the rind

O brother, (to dwell in) a dark and cold place, to endure patiently sorrow and weakness and pain,

Is the Fountain of Life and the cup of (spiritual) intoxication, for those heights are all in lowliness

That Spring is implied in autumn, and that autumn is (fulfilled) in the Spring do not flee from it

2265 Be a fellow-traveller with grief, agree with desolation, seek long (lasting) life in thy death (to self)

Do not listen to what thy fleshly soul says, that this place (of self-mortification) is bad, inasmuch as her doings are contrary (to thy spiritual advancement)

Do thou oppose her, for such (is the) injunction (that) has come from the prophets in the world

It becomes necessary to take counsel concerning things to be done, so that there may not be repentance in the end

The community said, "With whom shall we take counsel?" The prophets answered, "With intellect, (which is) the Imám (leader) "

2270 He (the questioner) said, "(But) if a child should come in, or a woman who has no judgement or clear understanding "

"Take counsel with her," said he (the prophet), "and do the contrary of what she bids (thee), and go thy way "

[1] Literally, "the friend of the Cave "

Know that your fleshly soul is woman and worse than woman, because woman is a part (of evil), but your fleshly soul is evil entire

If you take counsel with your fleshly soul, oppose that vile one (in) whatsoever she may say

If she bid you pray and fast—the fleshly soul is a great plotter, she will bring some plot against you to birth

(When you take) counsel with your fleshly soul concerning (your) actions—whatsoever she tells (you to do), the reverse of that is perfectly right

(If) you cannot cope with her and her contumacy, go to a friend and mix with him

Mind gains strength from another mind the sugar-cane is made perfect by the sugar-cane

I have seen (wondrous) things (arising) from the deceitfulness of the fleshly soul, for by her magic she takes away the faculties of discernment

She will proffer afresh to you promises that she has broken thousands of times

If your life be prolonged[1] even for a hundred years, she will lay before you a new pretext every day

She utters cold (vain) promises (as though) warm (from the heart), (she is) a witch, she ties up the manhood of a man

O (thou who art the) radiance of God, Husámu'ddín, come! for without thee no herbs will grow from the brackish soil

A curtain has been let down from heaven because of the curse of one whose heart is sorely vexed

This destiny only the (Divine) destiny can cure the understanding of His creatures is stunned at His destiny, stunned

The black serpent that was (as) a worm fallen on the road has become a dragon,

(But) in thy hand, O thou with (love for) whom the soul of Moses is intoxicated, the dragon or serpent became (as) the rod (in the hand of Moses)

God gave thee command, saying, "*Take it, fear not*, so that the dragon may become a rod in thy hand"

Hark, show the white hand, O King out of the black nights reveal a new dawn!

A hell hath blazed forth, breathe (thy) enchantment over it, O thou whose breath is more (excellent) than the breath of the sea

She (the fleshly soul) is the guileful sea that shows (but) a (little) foam, she is the hell that from guile shows (but) a (little) heat

She appears exiguous in your eyes, to the end that you may

[1] Literally, "grant a respite"

regard her as feeble and that your wrath may be stirred (against her),

Even as there was a dense host (of infidels), (but) to the Prophet's eye it seemed small,

So that the Prophet set upon them without (fear of) the danger, but if he had deemed (them) more (in number), he would have acted cautiously in that (affair)

That was the Divine favour, and thou wert worthy of it, O Ahmad (Mohammed), else, thou wouldst have become faint-hearted

2295 God caused the outward and inward warfare to seem little to him and his Companions,

In order that He might make it easy for him to gain ease (success), and that he might not turn away his face from difficulty

For him, (God's) causing (the warfare) to seem little was victory, since God was his friend and taught him the way

(But) he that hath not God for his victorious support, alas if the fierce lion seem to him a cat

Alas if from afar he see a hundred as one, so that in vain confidence he enters on the fray

2300 He (God) causes a Prophet's sword to seem a dart and makes the fierce lion appear as a cat,

To the end that the fool may fall boldly to fighting, and that He may catch them by this device,

(And besides He is acting thus), in order that those dolts may have come towards the fire-temple by means of their own feet (by their own free will)

He is showing (what seems to you) a blade of straw, in order that you may quickly give a puff so as to make it vanish out of existence

Beware! for that straw has uprooted mountains through it the world is weeping, while it (the straw) is in laughter

2305 He makes this river-water seem (only) up to the ankle, (but) a hundred such as 'Áj son of 'Anaq have been drowned therein

He makes the wave of blood seem to him a mound of musk He makes the bottom of the sea seem dry land

Blind Pharaoh deemed that sea dry, so that in (the pride of his) manhood and strength he drave into it

When he enters (it), he is at the bottom of the sea how should the eye of Pharaoh be seeing?

The eye is made seeing by meeting with God how should God become the confidant of every fool?

2310 He (the fool) sees (what he thinks is) candy it is, in sooth, deadly poison, he sees (what he thinks is) the road it is, in sooth, the cry of the ghoul (luring him to destruction)

O sky, in the tribulation of (these) latter days thou art revolving swiftly, pray, give (us) time (respite and relief)

Thou art a keen dagger to assail us, thou art a poisoned lancet to bleed us

O sky, learn mercy from the Mercy of God do not, like a snake, inflict wounds on the hearts of ants

By the truth of Him who hath set the wheel of thy sphere turning above this (earthly) abode,

(We beseech thee to) revolve in another wise and show mercy, ere thou uproot us

(We beseech thee by) the truth of thy having fostered us at first, so that our (young) shoot grew up from (the nurture given by) water and earth,

By the truth of that King who created thee pure and displayed so many cressets in thee,

Who hath kept thee so flourishing and lasting that the materialist hath thought thee (existent) from eternity

Thanks (to God), we have come to know thy beginning the prophets have told that secret of thine

A man knows that a house is made (at some time or other), the spider which plays idly in it (knows) not (this)

How should the gnat know of what date this garden is?—for 'twas born in spring, and its death is in the (following) winter

The worm that is born miserably in (dry) wood—how should it know the wood at the time when it was a (sappy) shoot?

And if the worm should know (this), it would be intellect in its essential substance, the worm would be (only) its (outward) form

Intellect shows itself (in many) guises, (but) like the Jinn is leagues removed from them (in its real nature)

It is above the angels—what occasion is there for (comparing it with) the Jinn? (But) you have the wings of a gnat, you are flying downwards

Although your intellect is flying upward, the bird of your conventional notions is feeding below

Conventional knowledge is the bane of our souls, it is a borrowed thing, but we rest (at ease in the belief) that it is ours

It behoves us to become ignorant of this (worldly) wisdom, (rather) must we clutch at madness

Always flee from whatever you deem profitable to your (lower) self drink poison and spill the water of life

Revile any one that praises you lend (both) interest and capital to the destitute

Let safety go, and dwell in the place of fear (danger) leave reputation behind and be disgraced and notorious

I have tried far-thinking (provident) intellect, henceforth I will make myself mad

How Dalqak excused himself to the Sayyid-i Ajall (who asked him) why he had married a harlot

One night the Sayyid-i Ajall said to Dalqak, "You have married a harlot in haste

You ought to have disclosed this (matter) to me, so that we might have made a chaste (woman) your wife "

2335 Dalqak replied, "I have (already) married nine chaste and virtuous women they became harlots, and I wasted away with grief

I married this harlot without (previous) acquaintance (with her), in order to see how this one (also) would turn out in the end

Often have I tried (sound) intelligence, henceforth I will seek a nursery for insanity "

How an inquirer managed to draw into conversation an eminent (saintly) man who had feigned to be mad

A certain man was saying, "I want some one of intelligence, (that) I may consult him about a difficulty "

One said to him, "In our city there is nobody of intelligence except yonder man who appears to be mad

2340 Look, there is (one named) so-and-so mounted on a cane, he rides (it as a cock-horse) amongst the children

He is possessed of judgement and (keen as) a spark of fire, he is as the sky in dignity, and as the stars in high estate

His glory has become the (rational) soul of the Cherubim, he has become concealed in this (feigned) madness "

But you must not account every madman a (rational) soul do not, like Sámirí, lay down your head (in worship) to a calf

When a manifest saint has declared unto you hundreds of thousands of unseen things and hidden mysteries,

2345 And you have not had the (proper) understanding and knowledge, (so that) you have not distinguished dung from aloes-wood—

How, when the saint has made for himself a veil of madness, will you recognise him, O blind one?

If your eye of intuitive certainty is open, behold a (spiritual) captain under every stone

To the eye that is open and (as) a guide, every dervish-cloak hath a Moses in its embrace

'Tis only the saint (himself) that makes the saint known and makes fortunate whomsoever he will

2350 No one can recognise him by means of wisdom when he has feigned to be mad

When a seeing thief steals from a blind man, can he at all detect (the identity of) the thief (who is) in the act of passing?

The blind man does not know who it was that robbed him, even though the wicked thief may knock against him

When a dog bites a blind ragged mendicant, how should he recognise that ferocious dog?

How the dog attacked the mendicant who was blind

A dog was attacking, as (though it were) a warlike lion, a blind mendicant in a certain street

The dog rushes angrily at dervishes, the moon smears her 2355
eyes with dust of (the feet of) dervishes

The blind man was made helpless by the dog's barking and by (his) fear of the dog, the blind man began to pay honour to the dog,

Saying, "O prince of the chase, and O lion of the hunt, thine is the (upper) hand refrain thy hand from me!"—

For, (moved) by necessity, that (renowned) philosopher paid honour to (one vile as) the tail of an ass, and gave him the title of "noble"

He (the blind man) too, of necessity, said, "O lion, what (good) will come to thee from such a meagre prey as I am?

Thy friends are catching onagers in the desert, thou art 2360
catching a blind man in the street this is bad

Thy friends seek onagers by hunting (them), thou in (mere) malice seekest a blind man in the street"

The knowing dog has made the onager his prey, while this worthless dog has attacked a blind man

When the dog has learned the knowledge (imparted to him), he has escaped from error he hunts lawful prey in the jungles

When the dog has become knowing (*'alim*), he marches briskly, when the dog has become a knower of God (*'arif*), he becomes (as) the Men of the Cave

The dog has come to know who is the Master of the hunt 2365
O God, what is that knowing light?

(If) the blind man knows it not, 'tis not from (his) having no eye (to see), nay, 'tis because he is drunken with ignorance

Truly, the blind man is not more eyeless than the earth, and this earth, by the grace of God, has become a seer of (God's) enemies

It saw the Light of Moses and showed kindness to Moses, (but) Qárún it engulfed, (for) it knew Qárún

It quaked for the destruction of every false pretender it understood (the words that came) from God, "*O earth, swallow (thy water)!*"

2370 Earth and water and air and sparking fire are unacquainted with us, but acquainted with God

Contrariwise, we are aware of (things) other than God, (but) unaware (heedless) of God and of so many warners (prophets)

As a necessary consequence, they (the elements) all *shrank from (accepting) it (the trust offered to them)* (the edge of) their impulse to partake of life was blunted

They said, "We all are averse to this life, (namely), that one should be living in relation to created beings and dead in relation to God "

When he (any one) remains away from created beings, he is orphaned (single) for intimacy with God, the heart must be free (from relations with aught besides)

2375 When a thief steals some article of property from a blind man, the blind man is blindly lamenting

Until the thief say to him, "'Tis I that stole from thee, for I am an artful thief,"

How should the blind man know his thief, since he hath not the eye's light and that radiance (of vision)?

When he (the thief) speaks (and confesses), at once take tight hold of him, that he may tell the marks (descriptive) of the (stolen) goods

The Greater *Jihád* (Holy War), then, consists in squeezing (him) to the dregs, in order that he may tell what he has stolen and what he has carried off

2380 First, he has stolen your eye-salve, when you take it (from him), you will regain (your) insight

The goods of wisdom, which have been lost by (your) heart, are certainly to be found with the man of heart (the saint)

The blind of heart, notwithstanding (his possession of) life and hearing and sight, is never knowing the devilish thief by the traces (which he leaves)

Seek (that knowledge) from the man of heart, do not seek it from the inanimate, for (all other) people are inanimate beside (in comparison with) him

The seeker of counsel approached him (the saint who was feigning madness), saying, "O father who hast become (as) a child, tell (me) a secret "

2385 He answered, "Begone from this door-ring, for this door is not open Turn back to-day is not the day for secrets

If the spatial had (any) access to the non-spatial, I should be (seated) on the bench, (giving instruction) like the Shaykhs (spiritual directors) "

How the Police Inspector summoned the man who had fallen dead-drunk (on the ground) to (go to) prison

The Inspector came at midnight to a certain place he saw a man lying at the bottom of a wall

He cried, "Hey, you are drunk tell (me), what have you been drinking?" Said the man, "I have drunk of this which is in the jar "

"Pray," said he, "explain what is in the jar " He replied, "Some of what I have drunk " "(But)," said the Inspector, "this is hidden (from sight) "

He asked (again), "What is it that you have drunk?" He rejoined, "That which is hidden in the jar "

These questions and answers were becoming a (vicious) circle The Inspector was left (stuck) in the mud, like an ass

The Inspector said to him, "Come now, say 'Ah'", (but) the drunken man, at the moment of utterance, said "Hú, Hu "

"I told you to say 'Ah'," said he, "you are saying 'Hú' " "(Because) I am glad," he replied, "while you are bent with grief

'Ah' is (uttered) on account of pain and grief and injustice, the 'Hú, Hú' of the wine-drinkers is from joy "

The Inspector said, "I know nothing about this Get up, get up! Don't retail mystic lore, and leave off this wrangling "

"Go away," said the man, "what have you to do with me?" "You are drunk," the Inspector said "Get up and come to prison "

Said the drunken man, "O Inspector, let me alone and go away How is it possible to carry off pledges from one that is naked?

If indeed I had had the power to walk, I should have gone to my house—and (then) how would this (affair between us) have occurred?

Were I (still) possessed of understanding and of contingent (unreal) existence, I should be on the bench, (giving instruction) like the Shaykhs "

How the inquirer, for the second time, drew that eminent (saint) into conversation, in order that his condition might be made better known (to the inquirer)

That seeker said, "O thou mounted on the cane, pray, ride thy horse this way for one moment "

He rode towards him, crying, "Hark, say as quick as you can (what you want), for my horse is very restive and fierce-tempered

Be quick, lest he kick you explain clearly what you are asking about "

He (the inquirer) saw no opportunity to tell his heart's secret: he at once made an evasion and drew him into jesting talk

He said, "I wish to marry a woman in this street who is suitable for one like me?"

2405 "There are three kinds of women in the world," said he "two of those are a sorrow, and one is the soul's treasure

The first, when you marry her, is wholly yours, and the second is half yours and half separate (from you),

And the third, know she is not yours at all You have heard this Away (with you)!—I start in a trice—

Lest my horse let fly a kick at you, so that you fall and never rise up (again)"

The Shaykh rode off amongst the children, (but) the young man shouted to him once more,

2410 "Come, prithee declare the exposition of this Thou hast said that these women are of three kinds pick (them) out"

He rode towards him and said to him, "The virgin of your choice will be wholly yours, and you will gain freedom from sorrow,

And she that is half yours is the (childless) widow, and she that is nothing (to you) is the married woman with a child

When she has a child by her first husband, her love and whole heart will go there

(Now) get away, lest my horse launch a kick, and the hoof of my restive horse land upon you"

2415 The Shaykh gave a loud cry of jubilation and rode back he again called the children to him

That inquirer shouted to him once more, "Come (hither), I have one question left, O sovereign king"

He rode back in this direction "Say what it is," he cried, "as quick as you can, for yonder child has enraptured my heart[1]"

Said the other, "O king, with such intelligence and erudition (as thou hast), what dissimulation is this? What acting is this? Oh, 'tis a marvel!

Thou transcendest the Universal Intellect in (thy power of) elucidation Thou art a sun how art thou hid in madness?"

2420 He replied, "These rascals are proposing to make me Cadi in this their city

I raised objections, (but) they said to me, 'Nay, there is none so learned and accomplished as thou

Whilst thou art in existence, it is unlawful and wicked that any one inferior to thee should cite Prophetic Traditions in the office of Cadi

Permission is not (given) in the Law, that we should appoint one less than thee as (our) prince and leader'

[1] Literally, "has carried off my polo-ball from the field"

By this necessity I was made distraught and mad (in appearance), but inwardly I am just the same as I was

My intelligence is the (hidden) treasure, and I am the ruin 2425
(which covers it), if I display the treasure, (then) I am mad (indeed)

The (real) madman is he that has not gone mad, he that has seen this night-patrol and has not gone home

My knowledge is substantial, not accidental, and this precious (thing) is not for (the purpose of gaining) every (worldly) interest

I am a mine of candy, I am a plantation of sugar-canes it is growing from me, and at the same time I am eating (of it)

Knowledge is conventional and acquired (not real), when he (its owner) laments because the hearer is averse to (hearing) it

Since it is (learned) as a bait (for popularity), not for the sake 2430
of (spiritual) enlightenment, he (the seeker of religious knowledge) is just as (bad) as the seeker of vile worldly knowledge,

(For) he is seeking knowledge on account of the vulgar and the noble, not in order that he may win release from this world

Like a mouse, he has burrowed in every direction, since the light drove him (back) from the door (the entrance to the hole) and said, 'Away!'

Inasmuch as he had no way (of getting out) to the open country and the light, he continued to make (such) an exertion even in that darkness

If God give him wings, the wings of Wisdom, he will escape from mousiness and will fly like the birds,

But if he seek not wings, he will remain underground with 2435
no hope of traversing the path to Simák[1]

Dialectic knowledge, which is soulless, is in love with (eager for) the countenance of customers,

(But) though it is robust at the time of disputation, it is dead and gone when it has no customer

My purchaser is God He is drawing me aloft, for *God hath purchased*

My bloodwit (the reward of my self-sacrifice) is the beauty of the Glorious One I enjoy my bloodwit (as) lawful earnings

Abandon these insolvent customers what purchase can be 2440
made by a handful of (worthless) clay?

Do not eat clay, do not buy clay, do not seek clay, because the eater of clay is always pale-faced

Eat your heart (in love of God), that you may be young always, (and that) your visage (may be rosy) with Divine illumination, like the *arghawán*"

O Lord, this gift is not (within) the compass of our work

[1] The name of a star

(achievement) verily, (the gift of) Thy grace is (not according to our work, but) according to Thy mysterious grace

Take our hands (help us), buy (redeem) us from our hands (self-existence), lift the veil (between Thee and us), and do not tear our veil (do not expose us to shame)

2445 Redeem us from this filthy self (*nafs*) its knife has reached our bones

Who will loose these strong chains from helpless ones like us, O king uncrowned and unthroned?

Who except (Thee in) Thy bounty, O Loving One, can loose such a heavy lock?

Let us turn our heads from ourselves towards Thee, inasmuch as Thou art nigher unto us than we (unto ourselves)

Even this prayer is Thy gift and lesson (to us), else, wherefore has a rose-bed grown in an ash-pit?

2450 Save through Thy munificence, 'tis impossible to convey understanding and reason into the midst of blood and entrails

This flowing light (proceeds) from two pieces of fat (the two eyeballs) their waves of light reach up to the sky

The piece of flesh which is the tongue—from it the flood of Wisdom is flowing, like a stream,

Towards a cavity, whereof the name is "ears," up to the orchard of the (rational) soul, whereof the fruit is intellections

Its main course is the highway of the orchard of souls, the orchards and gardens of the world are its branches

2455 That, that, is the source and fountainhead of joy quick, recite (the text), (*gardens*) *beneath which flow the rivers*

Conclusion of the admonishment given by the Prophet, God bless and save him, to the sick man

The Prophet said to the sick man, when he visited (his) suffering friend,

"Maybe you have made a prayer of some (peculiar) sort, and from ignorance have (as it were) eaten some poisoned food

Bring to mind what (sort of) a prayer you said when you were being vexed by the guile of the fleshly soul"

He answered, "I do not remember, but direct a (spiritual) influence towards me, and it (the prayer) will come to my memory in a moment"

2460 Through the light-giving presence of Muṣṭafá (Mohammed), that prayer came into his mind,

(From) the aspiration of the Prophet who dwells in light there came into his mind that which had been lost,

Through the window which is between heart and heart flashed the light that separates truth and falsehood

He said, "Look now, I have remembered, O Prophet, the prayer which I, impertinent fool, spoke

When I was being caught in (the toils of) sin, and drowning (therein) was clutching at straws—

(Whilst) there was coming from thee to sinners a threat and menace of punishment exceedingly severe—

(And) I was becoming agitated, and there was no help (for me), (since) there were chains made fast and a lock not (to be) opened

Neither room for patience nor means of flight, neither hope of repenting nor opportunity for rebelling—

I, like Hárút and Márút, was crying in sorrow, 'Alas!' and saying, 'O my Creator!'"

Because of the dangers (of the Last Judgement) Hárut and Márut openly chose the pit of Babylon,

So that they might suffer here (in this world) the punishment of the world to come, and they are cunning and intelligent and magician-like

They acted well, and 'twas fitly done the pain of smoke is lighter than (that of) fire

The pain of that (future) world is beyond description, light is the pain of this world beside it

Oh, happy he that wages a holy war (of self-mortification), and puts a restraint upon the body and deals justice (against it),

And, in order that he may be delivered from the pain of that world, lays upon himself this pain of serving God

"I was saying, 'O Lord, quickly inflict on me in *this* world that punishment,

So that I may have exemption (from it) in yonder world' About such-like a request was I knocking at the door[1]

(Thereupon) such a (painful) sickness as this appeared in me through pain my soul was deprived of rest

I have been left without power to perform my *dhikr* (commemoration of God) and litanies I have become unconscious of myself and of (all) good and ill

If I had not now beheld thy face, O thou whose scent is fortunate and blessed,

I should have passed altogether from the bondage (of this life) Thou in kingly fashion hast bestowed on me this sympathy"

Said the Prophet, "Hey! do not offer this prayer again do not dig yourself up from root and base

What strength have you, O wretched ant, to endure that He should lay on you such a lofty mountain?"

He answered, "O Sultan, I repent (and vow) that in no wise will I (henceforth) brag recklessly

This world is the Desert (of the Israelites), and thou art

[1] *I e* "such was the petition I made to God"

Moses, and we because of (our) sin remain in the Desert in tribulation

2485 We are wayfaring for years, and at the end we are still held captive in the first stage (of the journey)

If the heart of Moses were pleased with us, there would be shown (to us) the way through the Desert and the (farthest) border (thereof),

And if he were wholly disgusted with us, how by any means would trays of food come to us from heaven?

How would springs gush from a rock, (and how) would there be security for our lives in the desert?

Nay, truly, fire would come instead of trays flames would beat upon us in this abode

2490 Forasmuch as Moses has become of two minds concerning us, he is sometimes our enemy and sometimes our friend

His anger sets fire to our goods, his clemency becomes a shield against affliction

When (how) may it be that anger shall again become clemency? This is not extraordinary (as proceeding) from thy grace, O venerable one

To praise any one present is (a cause of) embarrassment, on this account I am purposely using the name of Moses, like this

Otherwise, how should Moses deem it right that I make mention of anybody before thee?

2495 Our covenant hath been broken hundreds and thousands of times, Thy covenant, like a mountain, stands firm and stable

Our covenant is straw and subject to every wind (of passion), Thy covenant is a mountain, and even more than a hundred mountains

By the truth of that power (which is Thine), have some mercy upon our mutability, O Ruler of (all) mutations!

We have seen ourselves (as we really are) and our shame Put us not to further trial, O King,

So that (by sparing us) Thou wilt have concealed other disgraces[1], O Bounteous One whose help we implore!

2500 Thou art infinite in beauty and perfection, we are infinite in wrongness and error

Direct Thy infinity, O Bounteous One, upon the infinite wrongness of a handful of vile wretches (such as we are)

Oh, come, for of our cloth-piece (only) a single thread remains we were a city, and (only) a single wall remains

(Save) the remnant, (save) the remnant, O Sovereign, that the soul of the Devil may not rejoice entirely—

Not for our sakes, (but) for the sake of the primal grace through which Thou didst seek out them that had lost the way

[1] *I e* other acts of ours which would expose us to disgrace

As Thou hast shown Thy power, (so now) show Thy mercy, O Thou who hast implanted feelings of mercy in flesh and fat

If this prayer increase Thy wrath, do Thou teach (us) to pray, O Lord,

Even as, (when) Adam fell from Paradise, Thou gavest him (leave) to turn (in penitence) toward Thee, so that he escaped from the ugly Devil "

Who is the Devil that he should surpass Adam and win the game from him on such a board?

In truth, it all turned out to Adam's advantage that guile became a curse to the envious one

He (the Devil) saw one game, (but) he did not see two hundred games (which he should lose) therefore he cut down the supports of his own house

He set fire by night to the cornfield of others, (meanwhile) the wind (was) carrying the fire into his own field

The (Divine) curse was a blind to the Devil, so that he regarded that trickery (of his) as harm to (his) enemy.

The (Divine) curse is that which makes him (any one) see falsely, and makes him envious, self-conceited, and malicious,

To the end that he may not know that whoever does evil, it (that evil) will at last come back and smite him

He sees all the master-moves invertedly (hence) they result in check-mate to him and (in) failure and defeat

(The curse blinds him), because, if he regard himself as naught, (if) he regard the wound (his moral and spiritual blindness) as deadly and festering,

Pain will arise from such looking within, and the pain will bring him out from the veil (of self-conceit)

Until mothers are overtaken by the pains of childbirth, the child finds no way to be born

This (God-given) trust is in the heart, and the heart is pregnant (with it) these counsels (of the prophets and saints) are like the midwife

The midwife may say that the woman has no pain, (but) pain is necessary, pain is (makes) a way for the child (to be born)

He that is without pain is a brigand, because to be without pain is to say "I am God "

To say that "I" out of the (proper) time is a curse (to the speaker), to say that "I" at the (proper) time is a mercy (from God)

The "I" of Mansur (Halláj) certainly became a mercy, the "I" of Pharaoh became a curse Mark (this)!

Consequently, it is incumbent (on us) to behead every untimely bird (every cock that crows too soon), in order to give notice (warning)[1]

[1] *I e* we must die to self in order that we may show to others the evils of egoism

2525 What is "beheading"? Killing the fleshly soul in the holy (spiritual) war, and renouncing self,

Just as you would extract the scorpion's sting in order that it might be saved from being killed,

(Or) pull out the venomous fang of a snake, in order that the snake might escape from the calamity of being stoned (to death)

Nothing will slay the fleshly soul except the shadow (protection) of the Pír grasp tightly the skirt of that slayer of the flesh

When you grasp (it) tightly, that is (done by) the aid of Him (God) whatever strength comes into you is (the effect of) His drawing (you towards Him)

2530 Know that true is (the text) *thou didst not throw when thou threwest* whatsoever the soul soweth is from the Soul of the soul

He is the One that takes the hand (to help), and (He is) burden-bearing (long-suffering) have hope, from moment to moment, of (receiving) that breath (of inspiration) from Him

'Tis no harm if you have remained long without Him you have read that He is long in gripping (sinners), (though) gripping (them) tight

His Mercy is long in gripping, (but) grips tight His Presence does not keep you absent (from Him) for one moment

If you desire the explanation of this union and friendship, read thoughtfully (the Sura) *Wa'l-Ḍuha (By the Morn)*

2535 And if you say that evils too are from Him, (that is true), but how is it a defect in His grace?

(His) bestowing this evil is even His perfection I will tell you a parable (in illustration), O respected one

(A painter made two kinds of pictures—beautiful pictures and pictures devoid of beauty

He painted Joseph and fair-formed houris, he painted ugly afreets and devils

Both kinds of pictures are (evidence of) his mastery those (ugly ones) are not (evidence of) his ugliness, they are (evidence of) his bounty

2540 He makes the ugly of extreme ugliness—it is invested with all (possible) uglinesses—[1]

In order that the perfection of his skill may be displayed, (and that) the denier of his mastery may be put to shame

And if he cannot make the ugly, he is deficient (in skill) hence He (God) is the Creator of (both) the infidel and the sincere (faithful)

From this point of view, then, (both) infidelity and faith are bearing witness (to Him) both are bowing down in worship before His Lordliness)

But know that the faithful (believer) bows down willingly, because he is seeking (God's) pleasure and aiming (at that)

[1] Literally, "all uglinesses surround it"

The infidel too is a worshipper of God, (though) unwillingly, 2545
but his aim is (directed towards) another object of desire

(It is true that) he keeps the King's fortress in good repair, but he is claiming to be in command

He has become a rebel, to the intent that it may be his domain, (but) verily, in the end the fortress comes to be the King's

The faithful believer keeps that fortress in good repair for the sake of the King, not for place (and power)

The ugly one (the infidel) says, "O King who createst the ugly, Thou art able for (able to create) the beautiful as well as the despicable (and) ugly"

The beautiful one (the faithful believer) says, "O King of 2550
beauty and comeliness, Thou hast made me free from defects"

How the Prophet, God bless and save him, gave injunctions to the sick man and taught him to pray

The Prophet said to the sick man "Say thus —'O Thou that makest easy that which is hard,

Give good unto us in our present abode, and give good unto us in our future abode!

Make the way agreeable to us as a garden Thou indeed, O Glorious One, art our goal'"

At the Gathering (for Judgement) the true believers will say, "O angel, is it not (the case) that Hell is the common road,

(And that) true believer and infidel (alike) pass by it? We 2555
saw no smoke or fire in this road (which we have traversed)

Lo, here is Paradise and the Court of safety where, then, was that vile place of passage?"

Then the angel will say, "The garden of greenery which ye saw in a certain spot as ye passed—

That was Hell and the terrible place of chastisement, (but) unto you it became gardens and pleasaunces and trees

Inasmuch as with this soul of hellish nature, (this) miscreant fiery one that seeks (to lead you into) temptation,

Ye have striven (oft), and it hath become full of purity, and 2560
ye have quenched the fire (thereof) for God's sake,

(Inasmuch as) the fire of lust, which was flaming, hath become the verdure of piety and the light of guidance (unto the true faith),

(Inasmuch as) at once the fire of anger in you hath turned to forbearance, and the darkness of ignorance in you hath turned to knowledge,

(Inasmuch as) the fire of greed in you hath turned to unselfishness, and that envy (which) was like thorns hath turned to roses,

Inasmuch as ye formerly extinguished all these fires of your own for God's sake,

2565 And made the fiery soul like an orchard and cast in it the seed of fealty,

(Whilst) therein the nightingales of commemoration and glorification of God (were) singing sweetly in the garden by the river-side,

(Inasmuch as) ye have answered the call of God and have brought water into the blazing hell of your soul—

Our Hell also in regard to you hath become greenery and roses and plenty and riches."

What is the requital for well-doing, O son? Kindness and well-doing and valued recompense.

2570 "Did not ye say, 'We are devoted (to God): we are passing away before the attributes of Everlastingness?

We, whether we be cunning (sane) or mad, are intoxicated with that Cupbearer and that cup.

We lay our heads (submissively) upon His writ and mandate: we give our sweet lives in pawn (to Him).

So long as the thought of the Friend is in our inmost hearts, (all) our work is to serve (Him) and yield up our lives.'"

Wheresoever the candle of tribulation hath been lighted, hundreds of thousands of loving souls are burnt.

2575 Those lovers that are within the house (and nigh unto Him) are (as) moths to the candle of the face of the Friend.

O heart, go where they are bright[1] toward thee and are as a coat of mail to thee against afflictions,

And give thee a place within their souls, that they may fill thee with wine, like a cup.

Take thy abode within their souls: O radiant full-moon, make thy home in the sky!

Like Mercury, they will open the book of the heart, that they may reveal mysteries unto thee.

2580 Stay beside thy kinsfolk—how art thou roaming abroad? Cleave to the perfect Moon if thou art a piece of the moon.

What is the (cause of the) part's keeping aloof from its whole? What is (the cause of) all this mixture with (that which is) diverse?

Behold how the genus hath become species in the process (of differentiation): behold how the unseen things have become visible in emanation.

So long as thou wouldst fain be wheedled[2] like a woman, O man without wisdom, (thou wilt remain imperfect): how wilt thou be helped by lies and wheedling?

[1] *I.e.* unveiled and sincere.

[2] Literally, "thou art a buyer of blandishment."

Thou art taking flattery and sweet words and cajolement and putting them like gold in thy bosom

For thee the revilings and blows of the (spiritual) kings would be better than the praise of the unrighteous[1]

Swallow the slaps of the (spiritual) kings, do not swallow the honey of the rabble, to the end that through the fortune of (those) personages thou mayst (thyself) become a personage,

Because from them come felicity and robes of honour under the shelter of the spirit, body becomes soul

Wherever thou seest one (that is) naked and destitute, know that he hath fled from the (spiritual) master,

In order that he may become such as his heart desires—that blind, wicked, worthless heart of him

If he had become such as his master desired, he would have graced himself and his kindred

Whoever in the world flees from his master is fleeing from felicity Know this (for sure)!

Thou hast learned a trade to earn a livelihood for the body (now) set thy hand to a religious (spiritual) trade

In this world thou hast become clothed and rich when thou comest forth from here, how wilt thou do?

Learn such a trade that hereafter the earning of God's forgiveness may come in as revenue (to thee)

Yonder world is a city full of trafficking and earning think not that the earnings here (in this world) are a sufficiency

The high God hath said that beside those (the next world's) earnings these earnings in the (present) world are (but) children's play—

As a child that embraces another child modo coitum facientis contactum facit,

(Or as) children at play set up a shop, (but) it is of no use (to them) except as a pastime

Night falls, and he (the child who acted as shopkeeper) comes home hungry the (other) children are gone, and he is left alone

This world is a playground, and death is the night thou returnest with an empty purse, tired out

The earnings of religion are love and inward rapture—capacity to receive the Light of God, O thou obstinate one!

This vile fleshly soul desires thee to earn that which passeth away how long wilt thou earn what is vile? Let it go! Enough!

If the vile fleshly soul desire thee to earn what is noble, there is some trick and plot behind it

[1] Literally, "them that have lost the way"

How Iblís awakened Mu'áwiya—may God be well-pleased with him!—saying, "Arise, it is time for prayer"

'Tis related in Tradition that Mu'áwiya was asleep in a nook of the palace

The palace-door was fastened from the inside, for he was fatigued by people's visits

Suddenly he was awakened by a man, (but) when he opened his eyes the man vanished

He said (to himself), "No one had entrance to the palace who is he that has shown such impudence and boldness?"

Then he went round and searched in order to find the trace of that one who had become hidden (from sight)

Behind the door he espied a luckless man who was hiding his face in the door and the curtain

"Hey," he cried, "who are you? What is your name?" "(To speak) plainly," said he, "my name is Iblís the damned"

He (Mu'áwiya) asked, "Why did you take pains to awaken me[1]? Tell the truth, don't tell me what is reverse and contrary (to the fact)[2]"

How Iblís gave Mu'áwiya, may God be well-pleased with him, a fall[3], and practised dissimulation and pretence, and how Mu'áwiya answered him

He said, "The time for prayer is (all but) come to an end you must run quickly to the mosque

Mustafá (Mohammed) said, boring the pearl of the idea, 'Make haste to perform your devotions before the time is past'"

He (Mu'áwiya) said, "Nay, nay, 'tis not thy purpose to be my guide unto any good

(If) a thief come secretly into my dwelling-place and say to me, 'I am keeping watch,'

How shall I believe that thief? How should a thief know the recompense and reward for good works?"

How Iblís again made answer to Mu'áwiya

He said, "At first I was an angel I traversed the way of obedience (to God) with (all my) soul

I was the confidant of them that follow the path (of devotion) I was familiar with them that dwell by the Throne of God

How should (one's) first calling go out of (one's) mind? How should (one's) first love go forth from (one's) heart?

[1] Literally, "why did you awaken me with earnestness?"
[2] Literally, "do not tell me reversely and contrariwise"
[3] Literally, "threw M from his ass," i e sought to mislead him and cast him into error

If in travel you see Anatolia or Khutan, how should love of 2620
your own country go from your heart?

I too have been one of those drunken with this wine I have been a lover at His court

They cut my navel in (predestined me from birth to) love of Him they sowed love of Him in my heart

I have seen good days from Fortune I have drunk the water of (Divine) Mercy in (my) spring-time

Was it not the hand of His bounty that sowed me? Was it not He that raised me up from non-existence?

Oh, many is the time I have received kindness from Him and 2625
walked in the rose-garden of (His) approval

He would lay the hand of mercy on my head, He would open (let flow) from me the fountains of grace

Who found milk for me in the season of my infancy? Who rocked my cradle? He

From whom did I drink milk other than His milk? Who nourished me except His providence?

The disposition which has entered with the milk into (their) being—how can it be discharged (expelled) from folk?

If the Sea of Bounty has given (me) a rebuke, (yet) how have 2630
the doors of Bounty been shut?

Giving and grace and favour are the fundamental substance of His coin wrath is (only) as a speck of alloy on it

He made the world for kindness' sake His sun caressed the motes (in its beams)

If separation (from Him) is big with His wrath, 'tis for the sake of knowing the worth of union with Him,

So that separation from Him may give the soul chastisement, (and that) the soul may know the value of the days of union

The Prophet has declared that God said, 'My purpose in 2635
creating was to do good

I created to the intent that they (My creatures) might draw some gain from Me, and that they might smear their hands with My honey,

Not to the end that I might draw some gain (from them), and that I might tear off a coat from one (who is) naked'

During the short while since He drove me from His presence, mine eye hath remained (fixed) upon His beauteous face,

(And my thought has always been), 'Such wrath from such a face! Oh, wonderful!' (whereas) every one (else) has become occupied with (considering) the (secondary) cause (His wrath)

I do not look at the cause (His wrath), which is temporal, 2640
inasmuch as the temporal (only) produces something temporal (like itself)

I am regarding (His eternally) precedent mercy whatsoever is temporal I rend in twain

Grant that my declining to worship (Adam) was from envy, (yet) that envy arises from love (of God), not from denial (of obedience to His command)

'Tis certain, all envy arises from love, (for fear) lest another become the companion of the beloved

Brooding jealousy is the necessary consequence of love, just as saying 'Live long!' must follow the sneeze[1]

2645 Since there was no play but this on His board[2], and He said, 'Play,' what more can I do?

I played the one play (move) that there was, and cast myself into woe

Even in woe I am tasting His delights I am mated by Him, mated by Him, mated by Him!

How shall any one, O noble sir, in (this world of) six directions deliver himself from the *shashdara* (the place with six doors)?

How shall the part of the six escape from the whole of the six, especially when the Unconditioned sets it wrong?

2650 Whoever is in the six is in the fire, (only) He that is the creator of the six will deliver him

Truly, whether it be infidelity or faith in Him (to which he is predestined), he is the hand-loom (instrument) of the Lord and belongs to Him"

How Mu'áwiya again exposed the deceitfulness of Iblís

The Amír said to him, "These things are true, but your share in these things is wanting

You have waylaid hundreds of thousands like me you have made a hole and have come into the treasure-house

You are fire and naphtha you burn, you cannot help it[3] Who is there whose raiment is not torn to pieces by your hand?

2655 Inasmuch as it is your nature, O fire, to be a cause of burning, there is no help but you must burn something

This is God's curse (on you), that He makes you burn (things) and makes you the master of all thieves

You have spoken with God and heard (Him speak) face to face what should I be (able to do) before your deceit, O enemy?

Your stock of knowledge is like the sound of (the fowler's) whistle it is the cry of birds, but it is bird-ensnaring

That (whistle) has waylaid myriads of birds, the bird (in each case) being duped (by the fancy) that a friend is come

2660 When it hears in the air the sound of the whistle, it comes (down) from the air and is made captive here

[1] Literally, "is the condition of the obligation imposed by sneezing"

[2] The board used in the game of *nard*

[3] Literally, "(if) you do not burn, there is no help"

Through your deceit the people of Noah are in lamentation they have hearts charred and bosoms (torn) to shreds

You gave 'Ád in this world to the wind (of destruction) you cast (them) into torment and sorrows

Through you was the stoning of the people of Lot through you were they sunk in the black rain-water

Through you was the brain of Nimrod crumbled, O you that have raised thousands of turmoils!

Through you the intelligence of Pharaoh, the acute and sage, became blinded, (so that) he found no understanding 2665

Through you also Bu Lahab became an unworthy one, through you also Bu 'l-Hakam became a Bu Jahl

O you that on this chessboard, for the sake of remembrance[1], have checkmated hundreds of thousands of masters,

O you by whose difficult attacking moves (our) hearts have been burned and your (own) heart has been blackened,

You are the sea of cunning, (and all) the creatures (are but) a drop you are like a mountain and (we) simple ones (are but) a mote

Who shall escape from your cunning, O adversary? We are drowned in the flood, except them that are protected (by God) 2670

By you many a fortunate star has been burned by you many an army and host have been scattered "

How Iblís again replied to Mu'áwiya

Iblís said to him, "Unravel this knot (and apprehend the matter) I am the touchstone for the false coin and the true

God hath made me the test of lion and cur, God hath made me the test of genuine coin and counterfeit

When have I blackened the false coin's face? I am the money-changer I have (only) valued it

To the good I act as guide, the dry branches I rip off 2675

I lay these (different) sorts of fodder (before people)—for what purpose? In order that it may be seen of what kind[2] the animal is

When a wolf bears[3] young to an antelope, and there is some doubt whether it (the young one) has the nature of wolf or antelope,

Drop you grass and bones in front of it (and see) to which side it quickly steps

If it comes towards the bones, it is canine, and if it craves the grass, it is assuredly of the antelope race

A wrath and a mercy were wedded to one another from these twain was born the world of good and evil 2680

[1] I e "as a memorial (of your skill) "

[2] Literally, "whose congener " [3] Or "begets "

Offer grass and bones, offer the food of the flesh and the f of the spirit

If he seek the food of the flesh, he is bobtailed (worthl and if he desire the food of the spirit, he is a (spirit chief.

If he serve the body, he is an ass, and if he go into the se the spirit, he will find pearls

Although these twain—good and evil—are different, these twain are (engaged) in one work

The prophets offer devotions, the enemies (of God) o lusts

How should I make the good man bad? I am not God I (only) a prompter, I am not their creator

(How) should I make the fair foul? I am not the Lord I (only) a mirror for the foul and the fair

The Hindoo burnt a mirror in vexation, saying, 'This (mir causes a man to look black-faced'

He (God) hath made me an informer and truth-teller, I may tell where the ugly one is and where the beautiful

I am a witness how is prison (the right place) for a witn I do not deserve (to go to) prison, God is the witness (to innocence)

Wherever I see a fruitful sapling, I foster (it) diligently a nurse

Wherever I see a sour and dry tree, I cut it down, in o that the musk may be delivered (separated) from the dung

The dry (tree) says to the gardener, 'O young man, why you cut off my head without fault (on my part)?'

The gardener says, 'Be silent, O evil-natured one! Is thy dryness sin enough in thee?'

The dry (tree) says, 'I am straight, I am not crooked are you houghing me (who am) without guilt?'

The gardener says, 'Hadst thou been blest, would that t wert crooked (if only) thou wert moist (full of sap)

Thou wouldst have drawn (into thyself) the Water of I thou wouldst have been steeped in the Water of Life

Thy seed and thy root were bad, and thou hast not b joined to a good tree

If the sour branch be joined to a sweet one, that sweet will strike (impress itself) on its nature'"

How Mu'áwiya dealt sternly with Iblís

Said the Amír, "O brigand, do not argue there is no for you (to penetrate) into me, (so) do not seek the way

You are a brigand, and I am a stranger and merchant should I purchase any garments that you may bring?

Do not prowl about my property, infidel as you are you are not one to buy the property of anybody

The brigand is not a buyer for (from) any person, and if he seem to be a buyer, 'tis (only his) deceit and artfulness

I wonder what this envier has in his gourd! O God, help us against this enemy!

If he pronounce one more screed (of his spells) over me, this 2705
brigand will rob me of the mantle (of my faith)

How Mu'áwiya complained of Iblís to the most high God and besought His aid

O God, this talk of his is like smoke take my hand (and help me), or else my raiment is blackened

I cannot prevail in argument with Iblis, for he leads every one, noble and base (alike), into temptation

Adam, who is the lord of *He taught (him) the Names*, is powerless before the lightning-like onset of this cur

He cast him from Paradise upon the face of the earth he (Adam) fell from Simák[1] into his net, like a fish,

Crying in lamentation, '*Verily, we have wronged (ourselves)*' 2710
There is no bound to his (Satan's) guile and imposture

In his every saying there is mischief myriads of enchantments are concealed in his mind

He unmans[2] men in a moment he kindles vain desire in man and woman

O Iblís, you that consume the people and seek to tempt them (to their ruin), on what ground did you awaken me? Tell the truth!"

How Iblís once more exhibited his deceit

He said, "No man that thinks evil (is suspicious) would hearken to the truth notwithstanding a hundred signs (that pointed it out)

Every mind that has conceived fancies (suspicions)—when 2715
you bring forward proof, its fancy is increased

When (sound and true) words enter it, they become a disease (they are corrupted and falsified) the holy warrior's sword becomes a tool for the thief

Therefore the answer to him is silence and rest to talk with a fool is madness

Why do you complain to God of me, O simpleton? Complain of the wickedness of that vile fleshly soul

You eat halwá (sweetmeat), (then) boils break out in you, fever lays hold of you, your health is disordered

[1] *I e* from high estate
[2] Literally, "ties up the manhood of"

2720 You curse Iblís, guiltless (though he is) How do you not see (that) that deception (proceeds) from yourself?

It is not (the fault) of Iblís, it is (the fault) of yourself, O misguided one, that you are running like a fox towards the sheep's fat tail

When you see the fat tails in the green field, 'tis a snare Why are you ignorant of this?

You are ignorant because desire for the fat tail has made you far from knowledge and has blinded your (spiritual) eye and intelligence

Your love of (sensual) things makes you blind and deaf, your black fleshly soul is the culprit do not quarrel (with others)

2725 Do not put the guilt on me, do not see upside down I am averse to evil and greed and enmity

I did an evil deed and am still repenting I am waiting that my night may turn to day

I have become suspect amongst mankind every man and woman lay their (evil) actions on me (at my door)

The helpless wolf, though he is hungry, is suspected of being in luxury[1]

When, because of feebleness, he cannot go his way, people say it is indigestion (arising) from gross (rich and heavy) food"

How Mu'áwiya once more pressed Iblís hard

2730 He said, "Nothing but the truth will save you justice is calling you to (speak) the truth

Tell the truth, so that you may be delivered from my hand cunning will not lay the dust of my war (will not induce me to leave you in peace)"

He (Iblís) said, "How do you know (the difference between) falsehood and truth, O thinker of vain fancies, (you that are) filled with (idle) thoughts (about me)?"

He answered, "The Prophet has given an indication he has laid down the touchstone (criterion) for (distinguishing) the base coin and the good

He has said, 'Falsehood[2] is (the cause of) disquiet in (men's) hearts', he has said, 'Truth is (the cause of) a joyous tranquillity'

2735 The (troubled) heart is not comforted by lying words water and oil kindle no light

(Only) in truthful speech is there comfort for the heart truths are the bait that entraps the heart[3]

[1] Literally, 'magnificence," "splendid condition"

[2] Read الكَذِبُ

[3] Literally, "the grain of the snare of the heart"

Sick, surely, and ill-savoured[1] is the heart that knows not (cannot distinguish) the taste of this and that

When the heart becomes whole (is healed) of pain and disease, it will recognise the flavour of falsehood and truth

When Adam's greed for the wheat[2] waxed great, it robbed Adam's heart of health

Then he gave ear to your lies and enticements he was befooled and drank the killing poison

At that moment he knew not scorpion (*kazhdum*) from wheat (*gandum*) discernment flies from one that is drunken with vain desire

The people are drunken with cupidity and desire hence they are accepting your cheatery

Whoever has rid his nature of vain desire has (thereby) made his (spiritual) eye familiar with the secret

How a cadi complained of the calamity of (holding) the office of cadi, and how his deputy answered him

They installed a cadi, (and meanwhile) he wept The deputy said, 'O cadi, what are you weeping for?

This is not the time for you to weep and lament it is the time for you to rejoice and receive felicitations '

'Ah,' said he, 'how shall a man without insight pronounce judgement—an ignorant man (decide) between two who know?

Those two adversaries are acquainted with their own case what should the poor cadi know of those two tangles?

He is ignorant and unaware of their (real) state how should he proceed (to give judgement) concerning their lives and property?'

He (the deputy) said, 'The litigants know (the truth of their case) and (nevertheless) are unsound (prejudiced), you are ignorant (of the facts), but you are the luminary of the whole body (of Moslems),

Because you have no prejudice to interfere (with your discernment), and that freedom (from prejudice) is light to the eyes,

While those two who know are blinded by their self-interest prejudice has put their knowledge into the grave

Unprejudicedness makes ignorance wise, prejudice makes knowledge perverse and iniquitous

So long as you accept no bribe, you are seeing, when you act covetously, you are blind and enslaved '

I have turned my nature away from vain desire I have not eaten delicious morsels

My heart, which tastes (and distinguishes), has become bright (like a clear mirror) it really knows truth from falsehood

[1] Literally, "ill-mouthed" [2] *I e* the forbidden fruit

How Mu'áwiya—may God be well-pleased with him!—induced Iblís to confess

Why did you awaken me? You are the enemy of wakefulness, O trickster

You are like poppy-seeds you put every one to sleep You are like wine you take away understanding and knowledge

I have impaled you Come, tell the truth I know what is true do not seek evasions

I expect from every person (only) that of which by nature and disposition he is the owner

2760 I do not look for any sugar from vinegar, I do not take the catamite for a soldier

I do not, like (idolatrous) infidels, seek (expect) from an idol that it should be God or even a sign from God

I do not seek the smell of musk from dung, I do not seek dry bricks in river-water

From Satan, who is other (than good), I do not look for this—that he should awaken me with good (intent)"

How Iblís told truly his hidden thought to Mu'áwiya—may God be well-pleased with him!

Iblís spoke many words of deceit and treachery, (but) the Amír hearkened not to him and strove (against him) and showed fortitude

2765 (At length), with the bitterest pangs[1] he (Iblís) said "O such-and-such, know that I awakened you for the purpose

That you might join the congregation (of Moslems) in praying after the Prophet of high estate

If the time of prayers had passed, this world would have become dark to you and without a gleam of light,

(And then) from disappointment and grief tears would have flowed from your two eyes in the fashion of (water from) water-skins,

(Because) every one has delight in some act of devotion and consequently cannot bear to miss it (even) for a short while

2770 That disappointment and grief would have been (as) a hundred prayers what is (ritual) prayer in comparison with the (spiritual) glow of humble supplication?"

[1] Literally, "from the roots of the teeth, i e with the utmost reluctance"

The excellence of the remorse felt by one who was sincere (in his devotion) for having missed the congregational prayers

A certain man was going into the mosque (when) the people were coming out of the mosque

He began to ask (one of them), saying, "What ails the congregation that they are coming out of the mosque (so) soon?"

That person said to him, "The Prophet has prayed with the congregation and finished (his) communion

How art thou going in, O foolish man, when the Prophet has given the blessing?"

He cried, "Ah!" and smoke issued from that (burning) sigh his sigh was giving forth the smell of blood from his heart

One of the congregation said, "Give me this sigh, and my prayers are thine"

He answered, "I give the sigh and accept the prayers" He (the other) took that sigh with a hundred yearnings (towards God)

At night, whilst (he was) asleep, a Voice said to him, "Thou hast bought the Water of Life and salvation

In honour of this choice and this appropriation the prayers of all the people have been accepted"

Conclusion of the confession made by Iblís to Mu'áwiya of his deceit

Then 'Azázíl[1] said to him, "O noble Amír, I must lay my deceit before (you)

If you had missed the prayers, you would then from heartache have uttered sighs and lamentations,

And that regret and that lamentation and that (sorrowful) yearning would have exceeded (in value) two hundred litanies and prayers

I awakened you in fear lest such a sigh might burn the veil (of formality),

In order that such a sigh should not be yours, in order that you should not have any way to it

I am envious from envy I acted thus I am the enemy my (proper) work is deceit and malice"

He (Mu'áwiya) said, "Now you have told the truth, you are veracious This (deceit) comes (naturally) from you to this you are adapted

You are a spider, you have flies as your prey, O cur, I am not a fly, (so) do not worry

I am a white falcon the King hunts me How should a spider weave his web about me?

[1] The name of Iblís before his fall

Go now, continue to catch flies as far as you can invite the flies to (partake of) some buttermilk,

2790 And if you call (them) to honey, that too will certainly be lies and buttermilk (fraud)

You awakened me, (but) it (that awakenment) was (really) slumber you showed (me) a ship, (but) that was (really) a whirlpool

You were calling me to good for the purpose that you might drive me away from the better good "

How a thief escaped because some one gave the alarm to the master of the house, who had nearly overtaken and caught the thief

This (behaviour of Iblís) is like that (which is told in the following story), how a certain man saw a thief in the house and ran after him

He ran after him (the length of) two or three fields, till the fatigue threw him into a sweat

2795 At the moment when, rushing on, he had come so near to him that he might spring upon him and seize him,

The second thief cried out to him, "Come, that you may see these signs of calamity

Be quick and turn back, O man of (prompt) action, that you may see (how) very pitiable (is) the state of things here "

He (the householder) said (to himself), "Maybe a thief is yonder if I do not return at once, this (fate) will befall me

He may lay hands upon my wife and child, (and in that case) how would it profit me to bind this thief (whom I am pursuing)?

2800 This Moslem is calling me in kindness unless I return quickly, evil will come to me "

In (confident) hope of the compassion of that well-disposed (friend), he left the thief and again set off (in another direction)

"O good friend," said he, "what is the matter? By whose hand (violence) is this lamentation and outcry of yours (caused)?"

"Look here," said (the other) "See the thief's footprints! The pimping[1] thief has gone this way

Look at the cuckold thief's footprints! Follow him by means of these marks and traces "

2805 He answered, "O fool, what are you telling me? Why, I had (as good as) caught him,

(But) at your cry I let the thief go I deemed you, ass (as you are), a (reasonable) man

What silly gabble and nonsense is this, O fellow? I (had) found the reality what (use to me) is the clue?"

He replied, "I am giving you a clue to the real (thing) This is the clue, I am acquainted with the reality "

[1] Literally, "cujus uxor pro mercede (conducitur)"

He (the householder) said, "You are an artful knave or else you are a fool, nay, you are a thief and cognisant of this affair

I was (on the point of) dragging my adversary along, (when) 2810
you let him escape, saying (to me), 'Here are (his) traces'"

You speak of (external) relations, (but) I transcend (all) relations In union (with God) where are signs or evidences?

The man that is debarred (from the Essence) sees the (Divine) action (as proceeding) from the Attributes he that has lost the Essence is in (confined to) the Attributes

Inasmuch as those united (with God) are absorbed in the Essence, O son, how should they look upon His Attributes?

When your head is at the bottom of the river, how will your eye fall on the colour of the water?

And if you come back from the bottom to the colour of the 2815
water, then you have received a coarse woollen garment and given (fine) fur[1] (in exchange)

The piety of the vulgar is sin in the elect, the unitive state of the vulgar is a veil in the elect[2]

If the king make a vizier a police inspector, the king is his enemy, he is not his friend

Also, that vizier will have committed some offence necessarily change (for the worse) is not (does not occur) without cause.

He that has been a police inspector from the first—to *him* that (office) has been fortune and livelihood from the beginning,

But he that was first the king's vizier—evil-doing is the cause 2820
of making him a police inspector

When the King has called you from the threshold into His presence, and again has driven you back to the threshold,

Know for sure that you have committed a sin and in folly have brought forward (pleaded) compulsion (as the cause),

Saying, "This was my (predestined) portion and lot" (But) then, why was that good luck in your hands yesterday?

Through folly you yourself have cut off your lot The worthy man augments his lot

The story of the Hypocrites and their building the Mosque of Opposition

It is fit if you will hearken to another parable concerning 2825
perversity (taken) from the narrative in the Qur'án

The Hypocrites played against the Prophet (just) such a crooked game at odd and even[3] (as was played by Iblís against Mu'áwiya),

[1] Literally, "hair"
[2] *I e* in their case it would be a state of separation from God
[3] A passage in Book V, where this phrase occurs, would seem to indicate that the meaning is "at every point"

Saying, "Let us build a mosque for the glory of the Mohammedan religion", and that was (really) apostasy (on their part)

Such a crooked game were they playing they built a mosque other than his mosque

They constructed (well) its floor and roof and dome, but they desired to disunite the (Moslem) community

2830 They came to the Prophet with (guileful) entreaty they knelt as camels before him,

Saying, "O Messenger of God, wilt thou for kindness' sake give thyself the trouble[1] (to walk) to that mosque,

To the end that it may be made blessed by thy approach—may thy days flourish until the Resurrection!

It is a mosque for muddy and cloudy days, a mosque for days of sore distress in times of poverty,

That a (poor) stranger may get charity and room (to shelter) there, and that this house of service may be frequented,

2835 So that the rites of the Religion may be multiplied and abound, because a bitter plight is sweetened (by being shared) with friends

Honour that place (by thy presence) for a short while declare us to be sincere, and give a good account of us

Show favour to the mosque and its founders Thou art the moon, we are the night comply with us for a moment,

In order that by thy beauty night may be made like day, O thou whose beauty is a night-illumining sun"

Alas! would that those words had been from the heart, so that the desire of those folk might have been accomplished!

2840 Courtesy that comes to the tongue without (sincerity of) heart and soul is like herbs on the ash-heap, O friends

Look at them from afar and pass on they are not fit for eating or smelling, O son

Do not, indeed, go (incline) towards the courtesy of the faithless, for it is a ruined bridge heed well (my warning)

If a fool set foot on it, the bridge will break, and will shatter that foot of his

Wherever an army is routed, it is because of two or three effeminate weaklings

2845 He (the poltroon) comes armed into the battle-line, like a man they (the soldiers) put their trust in him[2], saying, "Here's the Comrade of the Cave[3]"

He turns his face (in flight) when he sees wounds his going breaks your back[4]

This (topic) is long and is expanding, and that which is aimed at is becoming hidden (from sight)

[1] Literally, "trouble thy feet" [2] Literally, "set their hearts on him"
[3] *I e* Abú Bakr, the trusted friend of the Prophet
[4] *I e* deals a fatal blow to your hopes of victory

How the Hypocrites cajoled the Prophet—God bless and save him!—that they might take him to the Mosque of Opposition

They chanted spells over (spoke deceitful words to) the Messenger of God they were driving (hard) the steed of cunning and craft

The kind and compassionate Messenger proffered (in reply) nothing but smiles, nothing but "Yes "

He expressed (his) thanks to that company (deputation) he gladdened the envoys in (by) assent

Their deceit was apparent to him, point by point, in the same way as hairs in milk

That courteous one feigned not to see the hairs that polite one said "Bravo!" to the milk

Myriad hairs of deceit and fraud (he beheld), and at that time he closed his eyes to it all

That ocean of bounty spoke truly (when he said), "I am kinder unto you than you (yourselves are)

I am seated at the edge of a fire with an exceedingly unpleasant blaze and flame,

Ye are hastening towards it like moths, (while) both my hands have become moth-flaps (to beat you off) "

When the Prophet had resolved to set out (to the Mosque), the jealousy of God cried, "Do not hearken to the ghoul[1]!

For these wicked men have used deceit and cunning what they have put forward is entirely the reverse (of the truth)

Their intent was nothing but (to bring) black shame (upon thee) when have Christians or Jews sought the welfare of the (true) Religion?

They (the Hypocrites) have built a mosque upon Hell's bridge they have played the game of trickery with God

Their aim is to cause disunion amongst the Companions of the Prophet how should any vain fool understand the grace of God?

(They have built the Mosque) in order that they may fetch hither a Jew from Syria, with whose preaching the Jews are intoxicated "

The Prophet said (to the Hypocrites), "Yes (I will do as ye wish), but (just now) we are intending to march and starting on a campaign

As soon as I return from this expedition, I will then set out to that Mosque at once "

He (thus) put them off and hurried to the field of war he played a game of trickery with the tricksters

When he came back from the campaign, they returned and sought (the fulfilment of) that past promise

[1] *I e* "do not listen to the voice of temptation "

God said to him, "O Prophet, proclaim the treachery (with which they have acted), and if war be (the consequence), say, 'Let it be!'"

He (the Prophet) said, "O false people, be silent! Hush, lest I tell your secret thoughts."

When he had declared (to them) a few indications of their inmost thoughts, they were in evil plight[1].

Thereupon the envoys turned back from him crying, "God forfend! God forfend!"

Every Hypocrite, by way of fraud, brought a Qur'án under his arm to the Prophet,

In order to take oaths—for oaths are a shield, (this they did) because (taking) oaths is a custom followed by the wicked.

Since the wicked man does not keep faith in (matters of) religion, he will break (his) oath at any time.

The righteous have no need of (taking) oath, because they have two clear (discerning) eyes.

Breach of compacts and covenants is (the result) of stupidity; keeping of oaths and faithfulness (to one's word) is the practice of him that fears God.

Said the Prophet, "Shall I take your oaths as true, or the oath of God?"

Again those people, the Qur'án in their hands and the seal of fasting on their lips, swore another oath,

Saying, "By the truth of this holy and true Word (we swear) that the building of the Mosque is for God's sake.

In that place there is no contrivance of deceit: in that place there is (only) commemoration (of God) and sincerity and calling unto the Lord."

The Prophet answered, "The voice of God is coming into my ear like an echo.

God hath put a seal upon your ears, so that they make not haste to (hear) the voice of God.

Lo, the voice of God is coming to me distinctly: it is filtered clear for me, like the pure (liquor) from the dregs"—

Even as Moses from the direction of the Bush heard the voice of God saying, "O thou of blessed fortune!"

From the Bush he was hearing (the words), "*Lo, I am Allah*," and together with the words there appeared (Divine) lights.

Inasmuch as they (the Hypocrites) were left in the lurch by the light of (Divine) inspiration, they once more began to recite oaths anew.

Since God calls an oath a shield, how should the quarreller lay down the shield from his hand?

Again the Prophet, giving (them) the lie direct, said to them in plain terms, "Ye have lied."

[1] Literally, "their affair became bad."

How one of the Companions—may God be well-pleased with them!—thought (to himself) disapprovingly, "Why does not the Prophet—God bless and save him!—throw a veil (over their hypocrisy)?"

(Their request was ignominiously refused), so that one of the Prophet's Companions conceived in his heart dislike[1] of that recoilment,

Thinking, "Grey-haired and venerable old men like these—this Prophet is putting them to shame

Where is generosity? Where cloaking (of sins)? Where 2890
modesty (respect for the feelings of others)? The prophets cover up hundreds of thousands of faults"

Quickly, again, in his heart he asked pardon of God, lest he should be disgraced[2] for objecting (to the Prophet's behaviour)

The turpitude[3] of befriending the Hypocrites made the true believer wicked and rebellious like them

Again he was crying in supplication, "O Thou who knowest the inmost consciousness, do not leave me persisting in unbelief!

My heart is not in my control, as (my) eyesight (is), else I would at this moment burn my heart in anger"

(Whilst he was) in this thought, slumber seized him To him 2895
(dreaming), their mosque seemed full of dung

A corrupted place, its stones (steeped) in filth from the stones floated up black smoke

The smoke went into his throat and made it smart terrified[4] by the bitter smoke, he sprang from sleep

Forthwith he fell on his face and wept, saying, "O God, these things are the sign of (their) disbelief

Wrath (against them) is better, O God, than such forbearance (as mine), which separates me from the light of Faith"

If you scrutinise the labour of them that follow falsehood, 2900
(you will see that) it is stinking, coat upon coat, like an onion—

Every one (of their efforts) more pithless than another, (while), in the case of the sincere, (every effort) is more excellent than the other

Those folk (the Hypocrites) tied a hundred belts on their mantles[5] in order to destroy the Mosque of the people of Qubá—

Even as the Lords of the Elephant (who abode) in Abyssinia made a Ka'ba, (but) God set it afire,

(And then) they (the Abyssinians) made an attempt on the

[1] Literally, "disapproval came into his heart"
[2] Literally, "become pale-faced"
[3] Literally, "inauspiciousness"
[4] Literally, "from terror of"
[5] *I e* "girt themselves up with the utmost zeal"

Ka'ba in revenge read from the Word (of God) how they fared!

2905 The reprobates[1] of the Religion have indeed no equipment but cunning and deceit and contentiousness

Every Companion saw plainly (in sleep) some vision of that Mosque, so that the secret (purpose) of it became to them certain knowledge

If I should relate the visions, one by one, then the purity (of the Companions) would become certain to them that doubt,

But I am afraid of revealing their mystery they are the disdainful loved ones (of God), and disdain beseems them

They have received the (religious) Law (directly from God) without mechanical imitation (of others) they have taken that (unadulterated) coin without (applying) the touchstone

2910 The Wisdom of the Qur'án is like the true believer's stray camel every one has certain (intuitive) knowledge of his own stray

Story of the person who was seeking after his stray camel and inquiring about it

(If) you have lost a camel and sought it busily, how should you not know, when you find it, that it is yours?

What is the stray? You have lost a she-camel (she has) fled from your herd into a veil (of concealment)

The caravaneers have begun to load, (but) your camel is lost (and has disappeared) from the midst (of the caravan)

You are running to and fro with parched lips, the caravan is (now) far away, and night is near

2915 Your baggage is left on the ground, (lying) on the road of peril, (whilst) you are running about in search of the camel,

Crying, "O Moslems, who has seen a camel which this morning escaped from a stable?

Whoever will tell (me) a clue to my camel, I will give so many dirhems as a reward (for the information) "

You are requesting clues from every one every rascal is making a mock of you on this account,

Saying, "We saw a camel going in this direction, a reddish camel (going) towards yonder pasturage "

2920 One (of them) says, "It was crop-eared," and another says, "Its saddle-cloth was embroidered "

One says, "The camel had (only) one eye," and another says, "It (was suffering) from mange (and) had no hair "

For the sake of the reward every rascal, (speaking) at random, sets forth a hundred clues

[1] Literally, "the black-faced ones "

On being perplexed amidst discordant doctrines and finding (a means of) escape and deliverance

(This is) even as in the matter of knowledge (of God) every one describes (differently) the Unseen Object of description

The philosopher gives an explanation of another (a particular) kind, a scholastic theologian invalidates his statement,

And some one else jeers at both of them, while another hypocritically tires himself to death (trying to prove that he has real knowledge of God)

Each one (of them) gives these indications of the Way, in order that it may be supposed that they belong to that Village

Know the truth to be this, (that) all these (various persons) are not in the right, nor (again) are this herd entirely astray,

Because nothing false is shown without the True the fool bought (desired) spurious coin in the hope of (its being) gold

If there were no current (genuine) coin in the world, how would it be possible to issue false coins?

Unless there be truth, how should there be falsehood? That falsehood receives brilliance (prestige and reputation) from truth

They buy (desire) the wrong in hope of (its being) the right (if) poison go into a piece of sugar, then (and then only) they eat (poison)

If there be no savoury[1] wheat, what shall he get who sells barley, pretending that it is wheat?

Do not say, then, that all these utterances are false the false (pretenders) are a snare to the heart on the ground of (because they give) hope of truth[2]

Do not say, then, that all (this) is phantasy and error without truth phantasy exists not in the world

Truth is the Night of Power (which is) hidden amidst the (other) nights in order that the soul may make trial of every night

Not all nights are (the Night of) Power, O youth, nor are all nights void of that (Night)

Amongst the wearers of the dervish-cloak there is one (true) dervish make trial, and accept him that is true

Where is the sagacious and discerning believer, that he may distinguish effeminate wretches from men?

If there be no faulty things in the world, all fools would be (shrewd) merchants

Then it would be very easy to know (the value of) goods

[1] Literally, "pleasant to taste and eat"

[2] *I e* they win the heart because it is hoped or believed that they are not false, but true

when there is no defect, what (is the difference between) the incompetent and the competent (appraiser)?

And if everything is faulty, knowledge is of no advantage since everything here is (common) wood, aloes-wood is not (to be found)

He that says, "All are true"—'tis folly (on his part), and he that says, "All are false"—he is damned

Those who trade with the prophets have gained (thereby), those who trade with colour and scent (worldly vanities) are blind and blue (miserable)

The snake (*már*) appears in the eye as riches (*mál*) rub both your eyes well!

2945 Do not consider the happiness of this (worldly) traffic and profit consider the perdition of Pharaoh and Thamúd

On making trial of everything, so that the good and evil which are in it may be brought to view

The sky, which is beautiful and glorious—God saith, *Then turn thy gaze again* (towards it)

As regards this roof of light, be not content with one look look (many) times, see, *Are there any flaws?*

Since He hath told you to look ofttimes at this goodly roof, as a man seeking faults,

You may know, then, how much seeing and discerning the dark earth needs, to gain approval

2950 In order that we may strain the pure (folk) from the dregs, how much tribulation must our minds endure!

The trials of winter and autumn, the heat of summer, spring like the spirit (of life),

Winds and clouds and lightnings—(all these are to the end) that (such) happenings may bring distinctions into view,

(To the end) that dust-coloured (dusky) earth may bring forth all that it holds in its bosom, (whether) ruby or stone

Whatsoever this dark earth has stolen from the Treasury of God and the Sea of Bounty—

2955 Providence, the (Divine) governor, says, "Tell the truth! Declare what thou hast carried off, hair by hair"

The thief, that is, the earth, says, "Nothing, nothing!" The Governor (then) puts it to the torture

Sometimes the Governor speaks to it with kindness (sweet) as sugar, sometimes he hangs it up (in the air), and does his worst[1],

In order that, between force and favour, those concealed things may be brought to sight through the fire of fear and hope

[1] Literally, "whatever is worst"

Spring is the kindness of the Almighty Governor, and Autumn is God's intimidation and menace,

And Winter is the allegorical crucifixion, to the end that thou, O hidden thief, mayst be exposed

Then (again), he that wages the (spiritual) warfare has at one time (joyous) expansion of heart, at another time (grievous) oppression and pain and torment[1],

Because this water and clay, which is (the stuff of) our bodies, is the denier (enemy) and thief of the light of (our) souls

The High God lays upon our body, O man of fortitude[2], heat and cold and grief and pain,

Fear and hunger and impairment of wealth and body—all for the sake of the soul's coin being brought into sight (and use)

These threats and promises He hath sent forth on account of this good and evil which He hath mingled

Inasmuch as truth and falsehood have been mingled[3], and the good and bad coin have been poured[4] into the travelling-bag[5],

Therefore they need a picked touchstone, one that has undergone (many) tests in (assaying) realities,

So that it may become a criterion for these impostures, so that it may be a standard for these acts of providence

Give him milk, O mother of Moses, and cast him into the water be not afraid of (putting him to) the trial

Whoever drank that milk on the Day of *Alast*[6] distinguishes the milk (in this world), even as Moses (distinguished and knew his mother's milk)

If thou wishest fondly for thy child's discrimination (and recognition), *suckle* (him) now, O mother of Moses,

That he may know the taste of his mother's milk, and that his head may not sink to (desire and accept the milk of) a bad nurse

Explaining the moral of the story of the person seeking (the lost) camel

You have lost a camel, O trusty (friend), and every one is giving you a clue to the camel

You know not where the camel is, but you know that these clues are wrong

And he that has not lost a camel—he (too) in contention seeks a camel, just like him who has (really) lost it,

[1] "Torment" is used to translate *ghishsh u ghill*, literally, "latent spite and rancour," (or "insincerity and dissimulation"), which torment the heart

[2] Literally, "lion-man"

[3] Literally, "they have mingled"

[4] Literally, "they have poured"

[5] *Hurumdán*, literally, "receptacle for things which are jealously guarded"

[6] The Primal Covenant in the state of pre-existence

Saying, "Yes, I too have lost a camel I have brought a reward for any one who may find it"

(He says this) that he may take a partner's share with you in the camel he plays this trick because of coveting the camel

If you say to any one, "That clue was false," he (the pretender), in imitation of you, says the same

He does not know wrong clues from right, but your words are a cue[1] to that imitator

2980 When they mention right and likely clues, then comes to you the certainty *in which there is no doubt*

That (clue) becomes balm[2] to your sick soul, it becomes (brings) colour to your face and health and strength to you

Your eye becomes bright, your foot nimble[3], your body becomes (the vital) soul, and your (vital) soul (the rational) spirit

Then you will say, "O trusted (friend), you have spoken the truth these clues are a clear deliverance (communication and message)

Therein are (manifest) signs, sure informations, (distinct) evidences this is a title-deed and an ordainment of salvation"

2985 When he has given this clue, you will say, "Go before (me)! It is time for (setting out on) the enterprise be thou the leader!

I will follow thee, O truth-teller thou hast got scent of my camel show (me) where (it is)"

(But) to that person who is not the owner of a camel, and who is (engaged) in this quest of the camel for contention's sake—

His certainty is not increased by this right clue, save through reflexion from the true camel-seeker

From his (the latter's) earnestness and ardour he (the imitator) gets a scent (inkling) that these wild outcries of his are not (mere) babble

2990 He (the imitator) had no just claim to this camel, but he too has lost a camel, yes, (he has)

Desire for another's camel has become a veil to him, (so that) he has forgotten what he (himself) has lost

Wherever he (the owner) runs, this one (the imitator) runs from cupidity, he becomes a partner in the owner's pain

When a liar sets out (to journey) with a truthful man, his falsehood turns to truth of a sudden

In the desert whither that camel had hastened, the other one (the imitator) also found his own camel

2995 As soon as he saw it, he remembered his own, and ceased to covet the camels of friend and kinsman

That imitator became a true searcher when he saw his camel browsing there

[1] Literally, "staff" [2] Literally, "remedy" [3] Literally, "running"

(Only) at that moment did he become a seeker of the camel he was never (truly) seeking it till he saw it in the desert

After that, he began to go alone he opened his eyes (and went) towards his own camel

The sincere one said, "You have left me, (although) till now you were paying regard to me"

He replied, "Hitherto I have been an idle scoffer and, from 3000
cupidity, have been (engaged) in flattering (thee),

(But) now, when corporeally I have become parted from thee in the search, I have become sympathetic with thee (in spirit)

I was stealing the camel's description from thee, (but when) my spirit saw its own camel, it had its eye filled (with seeing)

Till I found it, I was not seeking it, now the copper is overcome, the gold overpowers it

My evil deeds have become pious acts entirely—thanks (to God)! Jest is vanished and earnest is realised—thanks (to God)!

Since my evil deeds have become the means of (my) attaining 3005
unto God, do not, then, throw any blame on my evil deeds

Thee thy sincerity had made a seeker, for me, toil and search opened (the way to) a sincere feeling

Thy sincerity led thee to seek, my seeking led me to a feeling of sincerity

I was sowing the seed of fortune in the earth, (though) I fancied it was labour without wages and hire

'Twas not labour without hire, 'twas an excellent earning (for) every grain that I sowed, a hundred grew

The thief went underhand (by stealth) to a certain house 3010
when he entered, he saw that it was his own house"

Be hot, O cold one, that heat may come put up with roughness, that ease may come

That (subject of my discourse) is not two camels, it is a single camel Verbal expression is confined, the meaning (to be expressed) is very full

The expression always fails to reach the meaning, hence the Prophet said, "(Whoso knows God), his tongue falters"

Speech is (like) an astrolabe in (its) reckoning how much does it know of the sky and the sun?—

Especially, of that Sky whereof this heaven is (no more than) 3015
a blade of straw, (that Sky) of whose Sun the (terrestrial) sun is (but) a mote?

Showing that there is in every soul the mischief of the Mosque of Opposition.

When it appeared that that was not a mosque, (but) was a house of intrigue and a trap laid by the Jews,

The Prophet then gave the command (and said), "Rase it and make it a dumping-place for rubbish and ashes"

The founder of the Mosque was false, like the Mosque (itself) 'tis not munificence if you sprinkle grain upon a snare

The meat that catches the fish on the hook—such a morsel is neither bounty nor generosity

The Mosque of the people of Qubá, which was inanimate—he (the Prophet) did not admit to (equality with) it that which was not its equal

(Even) in the case of lifeless things such a wrong did not come to pass the lord of justice (Mohammed) set fire to that unequal (and incongruous Mosque)

Therefore (*a fortiori*) in the case of the (human) essences, which are the foundation of all fundamentals, know that there (too) there are differences and divisions

Neither is his (one man's) life like his (another man's) life, nor is his death like his death

Never deem his (this one's) grave like his (that one's) grave How indeed shall I describe the difference (between them) in that (other) world?

Put thy work to the touchstone, O man of work, lest thou build the Mosque of the Opposers

Oft hast thou mocked at those Mosque-makers, (but) when thou considerest (carefully), thou thyself hast been one of them

Story of the Indian who quarrelled with his friend over a certain action and was not aware that he too was afflicted with (guilty of) it

Four Indians went into a mosque they bowed their heads and prostrated themselves for worship's sake

Each one performed the *takbír* (following) upon a *niyyat*, and began to pray with lowliness and contrition

(When) the muezzin came, from one of them fell a remark[1]—"O muezzin, have you given the call to prayers? Is it time?"

The second Indian said on the spur of the moment[2], "Hey, you have spoken, and (so) your prayer is null"

The third one said to the second, "O uncle, why do you rail at him? Tell yourself (how to behave)"

Said the fourth, "Praise be to God that I have not fallen into the pit (of error), like those three persons"

Hence the prayers of all the four were marred, and the fault-finders went astray more (than he who made the original mistake)

Oh, happy the soul that saw its own fault, and if any one told (found) a fault, wished eagerly (to take) that (fault) upon itself!—

[1] Literally, "an utterance escaped"
[2] Literally, "from the need (which he felt of expressing his feelings)"

Because half of him (every man) has always belonged to the 3035
realm of faults[1], and the other half of him to the realm of the Unseen

Since you have ten sores on your head, you must apply the plaster to yourself

Finding fault with the sore (in yourself) is the (right) remedy for him (who is at fault), when he has become broken (contrite), it is (then) the (proper) occasion for (obeying the Prophet's injunction), "Have pity"

(Even) if you have not the same fault, be not secure, maybe, that fault will afterwards become notorious in you

You have not heard from God (the comforting words) *Do not fear* why, then, have you deemed yourself secure and happy?

For years Iblís lived in good renown, (afterwards) he was 3040
disgraced mark what is (the meaning of) his name

His eminence was famed throughout the (celestial) world, (then) his fame turned to infamy[2]—oh, alas for him!

Do not seek fame till you are secure wash your face of fear, then show your face

Until your (own) beard grows, my good man, do not jeer at another whose chin is smooth

Consider this, that his (Satan's) soul was tried (by the wrath of God), so that he is fallen in (sunk in perdition), and (in his fall) he became a warning to you

You did not fall, so that you should be a warning to him He 3045
drank the poison eat you his sugar!

How the Ghuzz set about killing one man in order that another might be terrorised

Those blood-shedding (murderous) Ghuzz Turcomans came, and entered a village (on a raid) for plunder

They found two of the notables of that village, and made (ready in) haste to put one (of the two) to death

They tied his hands in order to sacrifice (kill) him He said, "O princes and high pillars (of the empire),

For what reason are ye seeking to slay me? Wherefore, pray, are ye thirsting after my blood?

What is the wisdom, what is the object, in killing me, when 3050
I am so poor and bare-bodied?"

He (one of the Ghuzz) replied, "To strike awe into this friend of yours, so that he may be afraid and produce (his) gold"

He (the man) said, "Why, he is poorer than I" "He has done it (made himself out to be poor) on purpose," replied the other, "he has gold"

[1] *I e* the world of evil
[2] Literally, "was reversed"

He (the man) said, "Since it is (a matter of) opinion, we are both the same we are (equally) exposed to[1] (mere) probability and doubt

Kill *him* first, O princes, in order that I may be afraid and point out the way to the gold "

3055 See, then, the lovingkindnesses of God, in that we have come (into the world) in the latter days, at the very end

The last epoch is in front of the (other) epochs in the Traditions of the Prophet is (the saying)—"(We are) the last (in time), the foremost (in excellence) "

In order that the destruction of the people of Noah and the people of Húd might display to our souls the proclaimer[2] of (Divine) Mercy (who calls us to repentance),

He (God) slew them, that we might fear Him, and if indeed He had done contrariwise, alas for thee!

Explaining the state of those who are self-conceited and unthankful for the blessing of the existence of the prophets and saints—peace be unto them!

Whosoever of them (the proclaimers of Divine Mercy) has spoken of fault and sin, and of a heart like stone, and of a black soul,

3060 And of holding light His commands, and of being free from care for His To-morrow[3],

And of being, like women, enslaved to the fleshly soul by passion and by love of this vile world,

And of fleeing from the pungent sayings of sincere counsellors, and of shrinking from the countenance of the righteous,

(And of) estrangement from the spirit and spiritual folk, (and of) fraud and fox-like behaviour towards the (spiritual) kings,

(And of) thinking the fully satisfied (saints) to be (greedy) beggars, (and of) secretly regarding them with enmity (arising) from envy—

3065 If he (such a saintly man as has been described) accept anything, you say he is a beggar, and if not, you say it is (from) hypocrisy and deceit and guile

If he mix (in society), you say he is covetous, and if not, you say he is excessively given to pride,

Or you hypocritically excuse yourself, saying, "I am held back (by what I have to do) in maintaining my wife and children

Neither have I leisure to scratch my head, nor have I leisure to cultivate religion

[1] Literally, "in the position of "
[2] *I e* the prophet
[3] The Day of Judgement

O so-and-so, remember me in thy benedictions[1], that in the end I may become one of the saints "

These words he does not even speak from (true) passion and ardour, ('tis as though) a drowsy man muttered some idle talk and went to sleep again

(He says), "I cannot help feeding my family I strain every nerve to earn[2] a lawful livelihood "

How lawful, O thou that hast become one of the lost? I deem nothing lawful but (to shed) thy blood

He can do without God, but not without food, he can do without the Religion, but not without the idols

O thou that canst not refrain thy self from this vile world, how canst thou refrain thyself from *Him who spread the earth as a carpet*?[3]

O thou that canst not refrain thyself from delight and luxury, how canst thou refrain thyself from the Bountiful God?

O thou that canst not refrain thyself from aught pure or foul, how canst thou refrain thyself from Him who created this?

Where is (one like) the Friend (of God)[4], who came forth from the cave (of idolatry), and said, "*This is my Lord* (as ye assert) Take heed! Where is the Maker (of all)?"—

(One who shall say), "I will not look at the two worlds until I see to whom these two assembly-places (really) belong

If I eat bread without the view of God's attributes, it will stick in my throat "

How should a morsel digest without the sight of Him, without the view of His roses and rose-garden?

Save in hope of God, who but an ox or ass would for one moment drink from this pond?

(Who but) he that was *like the cattle, nay, more lost*?—though (indeed) that stinkard is full of cunning

His cunning went headlong (to ruin), and he went headlong he passed a little while, and his day set

His brain became dull, his mind doting his life is gone—and like (the letter) *alif* he hath nothing

(As for) his saying, "I am thinking about it"—that too is only (part) of the deceit of the fleshly soul,

And (as for) his saying, "He (God) is forgiving and merciful" —that is naught but a trick of the villainous flesh

O thou that art dead with anxiety because thy hands are empty of bread, what is this fear, since He is forgiving and merciful?

[1] Literally, "will-power "

[2] Literally, "from the roots of my teeth I earn "

[3] Literally, "from *Excellent are They that made (it) smooth!*" (Qur'án, LI, 48)

[4] Abraham

How an old man complained of his ailments to a doctor, and how the doctor answered him

An old man said to a doctor, "I am in torment because of my brain"
The doctor replied, "That weakness of brain is from age"
Said the old man, "There are spots of darkness on my eyes"
3090 "It is from age, O ancient Shaykh," said the doctor "Awful
pain comes in my back," said he
"It is from age, O emaciated Shaykh" said the doctor
"Whatever I eat," said he, "is not digested"
The doctor replied, "Weakness of stomach also is (the result)
of age" Said he, "When I breathe, respiration is hard for me"
"Yes," he said, "it is asthma[1], when old age arrives, two
hundred diseases come on"
"O fool," he exclaimed, "you have stuck at this[2] this is all
that you have learned of medicine
3095 O crack-brained man, your intellect has not given you this
knowledge, that God hath appointed a remedy for every pain
You, stupid ass, from poorness of ability have remained
(fallen) on the ground for want of a sufficient foothold"
Then the doctor said to him, "O sexagenarian, this anger
and this choler are also from old age
Since all the functions and parts (of your body) are atrophied,
your self-control and patience have become weak"
He (an old man) cannot endure two words, he cries out
thereat, he cannot retain one draught, he vomits (it)—
3100 Except, to be sure, the Ancient (Pír) that is drunken with
God, and in whose inward being there is "a goodly life[3]"
Outwardly he is old, but within he is young What thing,
verily, is he? He is the saint and the prophet
If they are not manifest to the good and the evil (alike), what
is this envy which the worthless bear against them?
And if they do not know them with certain knowledge, what
is this hatred and hatching of plots and enmity?
And (again), if they know of the Resurrection and rising from
the dead, how should they dash themselves against a sharp
sword?
3105 He (the prophet or saint) smiles upon you, (but) do not deem
him to be such (as he appears) in his inward consciousness
are hidden a hundred Resurrections
Hell and Paradise are entirely parts of him he is beyond any
thought that you may conceive (of him)

[1] Literally "stoppage of breath"
[2] Literally, 'you have sewn (every stitch) on this (one spot)," or "you have fixed (all your answers) on this (single point)"
[3] Cf Qur'an, XVI, 99

All that you may think of is liable to pass away, he that comes not into thought is God

Wherefore (then do they behave with) presumption at the door of this house, if they know who is within the house?

Fools venerate the mosque and endeavour to destroy them that have the heart (in which God dwells)

That (mosque) is phenomenal, this (heart) is real, O asses! The (true) mosque is naught but the hearts of the (spiritual) captains 3110

The mosque that is the inward (consciousness) of the saints is the place of worship for all God is there

Until the heart of the man of God was grieved, never did God put any generation to shame

They were going to make war on the prophets they saw the body (of the prophet), they supposed he was a man

In thee are the moral natures of those peoples of yore how art not thou afraid lest thou be the same (as they)?[1]

Forasmuch as all those marks are in thee, and thou art (one) of them, how wilt thou be saved? 3115

The story of Júhí and the child who cried lamentably beside his father's bier

A child was crying bitterly and beating his head beside his father's coffin,

Saying, "Why, father, where are they taking you to press you tight under some earth?

They are taking you to a narrow and noisome house there is no carpet in it, nor any mat,

No lamp at night and no bread by day, neither smell nor sign of food is there

No door in good repair, no way to the roof, not one neighbour to be (your) refuge 3120

Your body, which was a place for the people's kisses—how should it go into a blind and murky house?—

A pitiless house and narrow room, where neither (your) face will be lasting nor (your) colour"

In this manner was he enumerating the qualities of the house, whilst he wrung tears of blood from his two eyes

Júhí said to his father, "O worthy (sir), by God they are taking this (corpse) to our house"

The father said to Júhí, "Don't be a fool!" "O papa," said he, "hear the marks (of identity) 3125

These marks which he mentioned one by one—our house has them (all), without uncertainty or doubt

(It has) neither mat nor lamp nor food, neither its door is in good repair, nor its court nor its roof"

[1] *I e* 'lest the same fate befall thee"

In this wise the disobedient have a hundred marks upon themselves, but how should they see them?

The house, namely, the heart that remains unlighted by the beams of the sun of (Divine) Majesty,

Is narrow and dark as the souls of Jews, (being) destitute of (spiritual) savour of the loving King

Neither has the radiance of the Sun shone into that heart, nor is there (in it any) spaciousness[1] or opening of the door

The tomb is better for thee than a heart like this Come now, arise from the tomb which is thy heart!

Thou art living and born of the living O gay and winsome one, art not thou choked by this narrow tomb?

Thou art the Joseph of the time and the sun of heaven arise from this pit and prison, and show thy face!

Thy Jonah has been cooked[2] in the fish's belly for his deliverance there is no means but[3] glorification of God

If he had not glorified (God), the fish's belly would have been his gaol and prison until *they shall be raised* (*from the dead*)

Through glorification he escaped from the body of the fish What is glorification? The sign (and token) of the Day of *Alast*[4]

If thou hast forgotten that glorification (rendered to God) by thy spirit, hearken to the glorifications of (uttered by) those Fishes (the prophets and saints)

Whosoever hath seen God is of God whosoever hath seen that Sea is that Fish

This world is a sea, and the body a fish, and the spirit is the Jonah debarred from the light of the dawn[5]

If it be a glorifier (of God), it is delivered from the fish, otherwise, it becomes digested therein and vanishes

The spiritual Fishes abound in this sea (the world), (but) thou seest them not, (though) they are flying around thee

Those Fishes are darting at[6] thee open thine eye, that thou mayst see them clearly

If thou art not seeing the Fishes plain—after all, thine ear hath heard their glorification (of God)

To practise patience is the soul of thy glorifications have patience, for that is the true glorification

No glorification hath such a (high) degree (as patience hath), have patience patience is the key to relief (from pain)

Patience is like the bridge Sirát, (with) Paradise on the other side with every fair (boy) there is an ugly pedagogue

So long as you flee from the pedagogue, there is no meeting

[1] Literally, "openness of space"

[2] *I e* "digested and assimilated", cf v 3141

[3] Literally, "no means of escape from" [4] See p 375 note 6

[5] Read صبوح = صبح This anomalous form occurs again in Book III, verse 333

[6] Literally, "throwing themselves upon," "bringing themselves into contact with"

(with the boy), because there is no parting of the handsome boy from the pedagogue

What should you know of the (sweet) savour of patience, O you of brittle heart—especially, of patience for the sake of that Beauty of Chigil?

A man's delight is in campaigns (for Islam) and in the glory and pomp (of war), pathico voluptas e pene est

Nihil est religio et precatio ejus nisi penis his thought has borne him down to the lowest depth

Though he rise to the sky, be not afraid of him, for (it is only) in love of lowness (degradation) he has studied (and gained eminence)

He gallops his horse towards lowness, albeit he rings the bell (proclaims that he is going) aloft

What is there to fear from the flags of beggars?—for those flags are (but) a means for (getting) a mouthful of bread

Timet puer quidam hominem corpulentum "Ne timueris," inquit, "O puer, ego enim vir non sum"

Juvenis robustus puerum deprehendit solum Palluit timore puer ne forte homo impetum faceret

"Securus esto," inquit, "mi pulcher, tu enim super me eris

Etiamsi terribilis (aspectu) sum, scito me impotentem esse ad coitum me sicut camelum conscende, propelle"

(With) the appearance of men and the reality like this—Adam without, the accursed Devil within—

O you that are big as the people of 'Ád, you resemble the drum against which a branch was beaten by the wind

A fox abandoned[1] his prey for the sake of a drum like a wind-filled leathern bag,

(But) when he found no (real) fatness in the drum, he said, "A hog is better than this empty bag"

Foxes are afraid of the noise of the drum, (but) the wise man beats it ever so much, saying, "Speak not!"

The story of an archer and his fear of a horseman who was riding in a forest

A horseman, armed and very terrible (in appearance), was riding in the forest on a high-bred horse

An expert archer espied him, and then from fear of him drew his bow,

To shoot an arrow The horseman shouted to him, "I am a weakling, though my body is big

Take heed! Take heed! Do not regard my bigness, for in the hour of battle I am less than an old woman"

[1] Literally, "gave to the wind"

"Pass on," said he, "thou hast spoken well, else by reason of my fear I should have shot a barb at thee"

Many are they whom implements of war have slain, (since they held) such a sword in their hands, without the manhood (to use it)

If you don the armour of Rustams, your soul goes (your life is lost) when you are not the man for it[1]

3170 Make your soul a shield and drop the sword[2], O son whoever is headless (selfless) saves his head from this King

Those weapons of yours are your (selfish) contriving and plotting, they have sprung from you and at the same time have wounded your soul

Since you have gained nothing by these contrivings, abandon contrivance, that happy fortunes may meet (you)

Since you have not for one moment enjoyed (any) fruit from the arts (of the schools), bid farewell to the arts, and seek always the Lord of bounties

Since these sciences bring you no blessing, make yourself a dunce and leave ill-luck behind

3175 Like the angels, say, "*We have no knowledge, O God, except what Thou hast taught us*[3]"

Story of the desert Arab and his putting sand in the sack and the philosopher's rebuking him

A certain Arab of the desert loaded a camel with two big sacks—(there was) one full of grain

He was seated on the top of both sacks A glib philosopher[4] questioned him

He asked him about his native land and led him to talk and said many fine things[5] in the course of (his) enquiry

Afterwards he said to him, "What are those two sacks filled with? Tell (me) the truth of the matter"

3180 He replied, "In one sack I have wheat, in the other is some sand—not food for men"

"Why," he asked, "did you load this sand?" "In order that the other sack might not remain alone," he replied

"For wisdom's sake," said he, "pour half the wheat of that pannier into the other,

So that the sacks may be lightened, and the camel too" He (the Arab) cried, "Bravo! O clever and noble sage!

Such subtle thought and excellent judgement! And you so naked, (journeying) on foot and in fatigue!"

[1] I e 'not able to defend yourself with it"
[2] I e "bear what God sends and do not resist"
[3] Qur án, II, 30, slightly altered
[4] Literally, "a slinger of discourse"
[5] Literally, "bored many pearls"

The good man took pity on the philosopher and resolved to 3185
mount him on the camel

He said to him again, "O fair-spoken sage, explain a little about your own circumstances as well

(With) such intelligence and talent as you have, are you a vizier or a king? Tell the truth"

He answered, "I am not (either of) these two I am of the common folk Look at my appearance and dress"

He asked, "How many camels have you? How many oxen?"

"I have neither these nor those," he replied "do not dig at me[1]"

He said, "At any rate, what goods have you in your shop?" 3190
He answered, "Where have I a shop, and where a dwelling-place?"

"Then," said he, "I will ask about money How much money (have you)?—for you are a solitary wanderer and one whose counsel is prized

With you is the elixir which changes the copper of the world (into) gold your understanding and knowledge are inlaid with pearls[2]"

"By God," he replied, "O chief of the Arabs, in my whole property there is not the means of (buying) food for the night

I run about with bare feet and naked body If any one will give me a loaf of bread—thither I go

From this wisdom and learning and excellence (of mind) I 3195
have got nothing but phantasy and headache"

Then the Arab said to him, "Begone far from my side, so that your ill-luck may not rain upon me

Take far away from me that unlucky wisdom of yours your speech is unlucky for (all) the people of the time

Either go you in that direction, and I will run in this direction, or if your way be forwards, I will go back

One sack of wheat and the other of sand is better for me than these vain contrivings

My foolishness is a very blessed foolishness, for my heart is 3200
well-furnished (with spiritual graces) and my soul is devout"

If thou desire that misery should vanish (from thee), endeavour that wisdom may vanish from thee—

The wisdom which is born of (human) nature and phantasy, the wisdom which lacks the overflowing grace of the Light of the Glorious (God)

The wisdom of this world brings increase of supposition and doubt, the wisdom of the Religion soars above the sky

The ingenious rascals of (this) latter time have aggrandised themselves over the ancients,

[1] *I e* "do not worry me with your questions"

[2] Literally, "have pearls, layer on layer," *i e* "are very precious"

3205 The (apt) learners of cunning have burnt (consumed) their hearts (in study) and have learned feints and tricks,

They have thrown to the winds patience and altruism and self-sacrifice and generosity—(qualities) which are the elixir of (spiritual) profit

The (right) thought is that which opens a way the (right) way is that on which a (spiritual) king advances

The (true) king is he that is king in himself, and is not made king by treasuries and armies,

So that his kingship remains unto everlasting, like the glory of the empire of the Mohammedan Religion

The miracles of Ibráhím son of Adham—may God sanctify his holy spirit!—on the sea-shore

3210 Thus, it is related of Ibráhím son of Adham that after a journey he sat down (to rest) by the edge of the sea

(Whilst) he was stitching his Sufí mantle, an Amír, walking on the shore, suddenly came to that spot

That Amír had been one of the Shaykh's servants, he recognized the Shaykh and at once bowed low

He was astounded at the Shaykh and at his dervish garb—(for) his nature and outward guise had become transformed—

(Marvelling) that he gave up such a grand kingdom, and chose that very pettifogging (spiritual) poverty[1],

3215 (And why) he lets the sovereignty of the Seven Climes be lost (by him), and plies the needle on his dervish-cloak, like a beggar

The Shaykh became aware of his thought a Shaykh is as the lion, and (people's) hearts are his jungle

He is entering, like hope and fear, into (their) hearts not hid from him are the secrets of the world

Keep watch over your hearts, O fruitless ones, in the presence of the majesty of the men of heart (saints)

Before the men of body (worldlings), respect is (shown) outwardly, for God is veiling the occult from them

3220 Before the men of heart (saints), respect is (shown) inwardly, because their hearts have insight into the secret thoughts

Thou art contrariwise for the sake of (worldly) position thou comest with reverence before them that are blind (to spiritual things), and sittest in the vestibule,

(But) before the seers thou behavest disrespectfully hence thou hast become fuel for the fire of lust

[1] I think باریك حروف is best taken as a compound adjective The alternative rendering would be "(spiritual) poverty—a very subtle (slender and unsubstantial) affair" In any case there is an antithesis between شگرف and باریك.

Since thou hast not (spiritual) perception and the light of (Divine) guidance, continue to polish (cleanse and brighten) thy face for the sake of the blind!

Before the seers, daub thy face with dirt! Act haughtily (towards them) notwithstanding such a stinking state (as thou art in)!

The Shaykh quickly threw his needle into the sea, and with a loud voice called for the needle

Myriads of Divine fishes—in the lips of each fish a needle of gold—

Lifted their heads from God's sea, saying, "Take, O Shaykh, God's needles"

He turned his face towards him (the Amír) and said to him, "O Amír, is the kingdom of the heart (spirit) better, or such a despicable kingdom (as I once possessed)?"

This (miracle) is the outward sign, this is nothing wait till you enter the inward (shrine and) see (what is there)!

From the garden they bring to town (only) a branch how should they carry thither the (whole) garden and orchard?—

Especially, a Garden whereof this heaven is (but) one leaf, nay, that is the kernel, and this other (world) is as the husk

(If) you are not stepping on (briskly) towards that Garden, seek more scent, and get rid of (your) rheum,

In order that that scent may draw your soul (thither), in order that that scent may become the light of your eyes

For the scent's sake Joseph, son of Jacob the prophet, said "*Cast (my shirt) upon my father's face*"

For this scent's sake Ahmad (Mohammed) constantly said in (his) exhortations "In the ritual prayer is the delight of mine eye"

The five (spiritual) senses are linked with one another, because all these five have grown from one root

The strength of one becomes the strength of the rest each one becomes a cup-bearer to the rest

Seeing with the eye increases speech, speech increases penetration in the eye

Penetration (of sight) becomes the (means of) awakening (stimulating) every sense, (so that) perception (of the spiritual) becomes familiar to (all) the senses

The beginning of the gnostic's illumination by the Light which sees the invisible world

When one sense in (the course of its) progress has loosed (its) bonds, all the rest of the senses become changed

When one sense has perceived things that are not objects of sense-perception, that which is of the invisible world becomes apparent to all the senses

When one sheep of the flock has jumped over a stream, then they all jump across on each other's heels

Drive the sheep, thy senses, to pasture let them browse on (the pasture indicated in the text)—*He who hath brought forth the herbage*,

That there they may browse on hyacinth and wild-rose, that they may make their way to the verdant meadows of the Realities,

3245 (That) every sense of thine may become an apostle to the senses (of others), and lead all senses into that Paradise,

(And then those) senses will tell their secret to thy senses, without tongue and without (conveying either) the proper or the metaphorical meaning,

For this proper meaning admits of (different) interpretations, and this guess-work is the source of (vain) imaginings,

(But in the case of) that truth which is immediate and intuitive, there is no room for any interpretation

When (all) senses have become subject to thy sense, the heavenly spheres cannot avoid (obedience to) thee

3250 When a dispute takes place as to the ownership of the husk, the husk belongs to him who possesses the kernel

When there happens to be a quarrel about a load of straw, observe who is the owner of the grain

The heavenly sphere, then, is the husk, and the light of the spirit is the kernel This (sky) is visible, that (spirit) is concealed, (but) do not stumble on this account

The body is manifest, the (vital) spirit is concealed the body is as the sleeve, the spirit as the hand

Again, the intellect is more concealed than the (vital) spirit (your mental) perception makes its way to (apprehends) the (vital) spirit sooner (than it apprehends the intellect)

3255 (If) you see a movement, you know that he (who moves) is alive, (but) this you do not know, that he is full of intellect,

Until regulated movements appear, and he by means of knowledge turns the motion of copper into gold

From manual actions being conformable (to reason) you may perceive that there is intellect (behind them)

The spirit (that partakes) of Divine inspiration is more concealed than the intellect, because it is (of) the Unseen it belongs to that side

The intellect of Ahmad (Mohammed) was not hidden from any one, (but) his spirit of (prophetic) inspiration was not apprehended by every soul

3260 The spirit of prophecy also has actions conformable (to reason), (but) the intellect does not apprehend (them), for that (spirit) is exalted (above intellectual apprehension)

Sometimes he (the man of intellect) regards (the actions of

one endowed with the spirit) as madness, sometimes he is bewildered, since it (all) depends on his becoming that (other one)[1],

As (for example) the intellect of Moses was troubled by seeing the reasonable actions of Khadir

His actions seemed unreasonable to Moses, since he (Moses) had not his (Khadir's) state (of Divine inspiration)

Inasmuch as the intellect of Moses becomes tied up (perplexed and helpless) in (the matter of) the mysterious (inspiration), who (what) is the intellect of a (mere) mouse, O excellent (reader)?

Conventional knowledge is (only) for sale (self-advertisement) when it finds a purchaser, it glows with delight 3265

The purchaser of real knowledge[2] is God its market is always splendid

He (the owner of real knowledge) has closed his lips (and is) enraptured in (his) trading the purchasers are without end, for *God hath purchased*

The angels purchase Adam's[3] teaching, the devils and Jinn are not privileged to receive it

Adam, inform them of the Names, give (them) teaching, explain the mysteries of God, hair by hair

Such a person as is short-sighted, plunged in variability and without steadfastness, 3270

I called a "mouse," because his place is in the earth (of the body) earth is the place of living for the mouse

He knows (many) ways, but (only) underground he has pierced the earth in every direction

The mouse-soul is naught but a nibbler to the mouse is given a mind proportionate to its need,

Because without need the Almighty God does not give anything to any one

If the earth had not been needed by the (inhabitants of the) world, the Lord of all beings would not have created any (earth), 3275

And if this quaking earth had not needed mountains, He would not have created them sublime (as they are),

And if there had not been need of the heavenly spheres also, He would not have created from non-existence the Seven Skies

The sun and moon and these stars—how did they come plain into view except through need?

Need, then, is the noose for (all) things that exist Man has instruments in proportion to his need

Therefore quickly augment thy need, O needy one, in order that the Sea of Bounty may surge up in lovingkindness 3280

[1] *I e* the intellectual man can never understand the spiritual man until he himself becomes spiritualised

[2] Literally, "the knowledge that is verified (by mystical experience)"

[3] "Adam" in this and the following verse is the saint, regarded as the perfect type of humanity

These beggars (are) on the (public) road, and every sufferer (among them) is displaying his need to the people—

Blindness and palsy and sickness and pain—that men's pity may be aroused by this need

Does he (any one) ever say, "Give bread, O people, for I have riches and granaries and trays (of viands)?"

God has not put eyes in the mole, because it does not need eyes for (getting) food

3285 It is able to live without eyes and sight in the dank earth it is independent of eyes

It never comes out from the earth but for theft, to the end that the Creator may purge it of that thievishness

After that (purification), it will get wings and become a bird, flying (aloft) and glorifying the Creator

Every moment, in the rose-garden of thanksgiving to God, it will produce a hundred (sweet) notes, like the nightingale,

Singing, "O Thou that deliverest me from evil qualities! O Thou that makest a hell Paradise!

3290 Thou puttest light in a piece of fat, Thou, O Self-sufficing One, givest (the sense of) hearing to a bone"

What connexion have those concepts (*e g* sight and hearing) with the body? What connexion has the apprehension of things with (their) names?

The word is like the nest, and the meaning is the bird the body is the river-bed, and the spirit is the rolling water

It is moving, and you say it is standing it is running, and you say it is keeping still

If you see not the movement of the water through the clods of earth—(yet it is moving) what are the sticks and straws (ever appearing) anew on it?

3295 Your sticks and straws are the forms (ideas) of thought (these) virgin forms are always coming on anew

The surface of the water of the stream of thought, as it rolls, is not without sticks and straws, (some) pleasing and (some) unsightly

The husks on the surface of this rolling water have sped along from the fruits of the Invisible Garden

Seek the kernels of the husks (not on the water, but) in the Garden, because the water comes from the Garden into the river-bed

If you see not the flow of the Water of Life, look at this movement of weeds in the stream

3300 When the water begins to pass by in fuller volume, the husks, (which are) the ideas, pass along it more quickly

When this stream has become extremely rapid in its flow, no care lingers in the minds of the gnostics

Since it is (then) exceedingly full and swift, on that account there is no room in it for anything but the water

How a stranger reviled the Shaykh and how the Shaykh's disciple answered him

A certain man brought charges against a Shaykh, saying, "He is wicked and not on the path of righteousness,

He is a wine-drinker and a hypocrite and a scoundrel how should he be one to succour his disciples?"

One (of the disciples) said to him, "Observe respect 'tis no light matter to think so ill of the great

Far is it from him and far from those (saintly) qualities of his that his clear (spirit) should be darkened by a flood (of sin)

Do not put such slander on the people of God! This is (mere) fancy on your part Turn over (a new) leaf

This (which you say) is not (true), and (even) if it should be, O land-fowl, what harm (comes) to the Red Sea from a carcase?

He (the Shaykh) is not less than the (statutory) two jugfuls or the small tank, so that a single drop (of impurity) should be able to disqualify him (for religious purposes)

The fire is no damage to Abraham, (but) let any one who is a Nimrod beware of it!"

The fleshly soul is Nimrod, and the intellect and spirit are the Friend of God (Abraham) the spirit is concerned with reality itself, and the fleshly soul with the proofs

These indications of the way are for the traveller who at every moment becomes lost in the desert

For them that have attained (to union with God) there is nothing (necessary) except the eye (of the spirit) and the lamp (of intuitive faith) they have no concern with indications (to guide them) or with a road (to travel by)

If the man that is united (with God) has mentioned some indication, he has mentioned (it) in order that the dialecticians may understand (his meaning)

For a new-born child the father makes babbling sounds, though his intellect may make a survey of the (whole) world

The dignity of the master's learning is not diminished if he say that (the letter) *alif* has nothing (has no diacritical mark)

For the sake of teaching that tongue-tied (child), one must go outside of one's own language (customary manner of speech)

You must come into (adopt) his language, in order that he may learn knowledge and science from you

All the people, then, are as his (the spiritual Teacher's) children this (fact) is necessary for the Pír (to bear in mind) when he gives (them) instruction

Infidelity hath a fixed limit and range—know (this for sure), (but) the Shaykh and the light of the Shaykh have no bound

Before the infinite all that is finite is naught everything except the Face of God is passing away

Infidelity and faith do not exist in the place where he (the Shaykh) is, because he is the kernel, while these twain are (only) colour and husk

These fleeting things have become a veil over that Face, like a lantern concealed beneath a bowl

So then, this bodily head is a screen to that (spiritual) head (source of mystic consciousness) before that head this bodily head is an infidel

3325 Who is the infidel? One forgetful of the faith of the Shaykh What is the dead? One ignorant of the (spiritual) life of the Shaykh

(Spiritual) life is naught but knowledge in (the time of) trial the more knowledge one has, the more (spiritual) life one has

Our spirit is more than the spirit of animals Wherefore? In respect that it has more knowledge

Hence the spirit of the angels is more than our spirit, for it is exempt from (transcends) the common sense,

And the spirit of mystical adepts is more than (that of) the angels Cease from bewilderment (on this subject)!

3330 For that reason Adam is their object of worship his spirit (spiritual life) is greater than their being

Else, (why were they commanded to worship him?) it would not be at all a suitable thing to command the superior to worship an inferior

How can the justice and kindness of the Maker approve that a rose should fall down in worship before a thorn?

Since the spirit (of the perfect saint) has become superior and has passed beyond the utmost limit (reached by men and angels), the soul of all things has become obedient to it—

Birds and fishes and Jinn and men—because it exceeds (them), and they are deficient (in comparison with it)

3335 The fish make needles for his (the saint's) mantle (they follow him as) threads follow needles

The rest of the story of Ibráhím son of Adham—may God sanctify his spirit!—on the sea-shore

When that Amír saw the Shaykh's command take effect in the coming of the fish, he fell into an ecstasy

He said, "Ah, the fish know the Pírs Fie on a person who is an outcast of the (holy) Court!

The fish have knowledge of the Pír, and we afar (from him)! We (are) damned to lack this fortune, and they blest (with enjoyment of it)!"

He bowed low, and departed weeping and desolate he

became mad for love of the opening of the door (to union with God)

Then, O you with unwashed face, what are you about? 3340
Whom are you combating and envying?

You are playing with a lion's tail you are making a foray against the angels

Why are you speaking evil of pure good? Beware, deem not that lowness (vilifying the saints) to be eminence!

What is evil? The needy, despicable copper Who is the Shaykh? The infinite elixir

If the copper was incapable (of being transmuted) by the elixir, (yet) the elixir was never turned into copper by the copper

What is evil? A rebel that works like fire Who is the Shaykh? 3345
The very Sea[1] of Eternity

Fire is always terrified by water When was water ever afraid of being set aflame?

You are observing defects on the face of the moon you are picking thorns in a Paradise

Picker of thorns, if you go into Paradise, you will find there no thorn but yourself

You are covering a sun with a sod you are seeking flaws in a perfect full-moon

A sun which shines throughout the world—how shall it be 3350
hidden for the sake of a bat?

Sins are made sinful by the disapproval of Pírs, mysteries are made mysterious by the jealousy of Pírs

If you are far (aloof in spirit from the saints), at any rate be joined (with them) through (paying) respect (to them) be alert and active in (showing) penitence,

(In the hope) that a breeze may be coming to you from that way (quarter) Why do you shut off the water of mercy by (your) enviousness?

Though you are far aloof, at (that) distance wag your tail (ingratiate yourself with them) *wherever ye be, turn your faces (thither)*

When an ass falls in mire through (going at) a rapid pace, he 3355
moves incessantly for the purpose of rising

He does not make the place smooth (and comfortable) to stay in he knows that it is not the place where he should live

Your sense has been less than the sense of the ass, for your heart has not recoiled from these clods of mud

You interpret (some canonical text) as an indulgence (authorising you to stay) in the mud, since you are not willing to tear your heart from it

(You say), "This is allowable for me I am under compulsion. God in His kindness will not chastise a helpless one (like me) "

[1] Or "the objective manifestation of the Sea "

3360 Indeed He has (already) chastised you, (but) like the blind hyena from self-deception you do not see this chastisement

They (the hunters) are saying, "The hyena is not in this place, look for him outside, for he is not in the cave"

This they say and (at the same time) put bonds on him, (whilst) he is saying, "They do not know of me (where I am)

If this enemy had known of me, how should he have exclaimed, 'Where is this hyena'?"

The statement of a certain individual that God most High would not punish him for sin, and Shu'ayb's answer to him

In the time of Shu'ayb a certain man was saying, "God hath seen many a fault from me

3365 How many sins and trespasses hath He seen me commit! And (still), God in His kindness does not punish me"

In answer to him God most High by the mysterious way spoke clearly into the ear of Shu'ayb,

Saying, "(Tell him), Thou hast said, 'How many sins have I committed! And (still) God in His kindness hath not punished me for my trespasses'

Thou art saying the opposite and reverse (of the truth), O fool, O thou that hast abandoned the road and taken to the wilderness!

How oft, how oft do I chastise thee, and thou unaware! Thou art lying (bound) in chains from head to foot

3370 Thy rust, coat on coat, O black pot, hath marred the visage of thy heart

Layers of rust have collected upon thy heart, so that it hath become blind to (the spiritual) mysteries"

If that smoke should beat upon a new pot, the traces of it would show, though it were (only as much as) a barley-corn,

Because everything is made manifest by (its) contrary upon a white object the black becomes conspicuous,

(But) when the pot has been blackened, then after this who will at once perceive the effect of the smoke upon it?

3375 The ironsmith who is an Ethiopian—the smoke is of the same colour as his face,

The Greek who does the work of an ironsmith—his face, from gathering smoke[1], becomes piebald (spotted with black)

Therefore he will quickly recognise the effect of sin, so that he will soon lament (and) say, "O God!"

(But) when he persists (in sin) and makes a practice of evil, and puts dust in the eye of meditation,

He thinks of penitence no more that sin becomes so sweet to his heart that (in the end) he comes to be without the Faith (he turns infidel)

[1] Literally, "from smokiness" Cf حرص‌آوری

That repenting and (crying) "O Lord!" are gone from him 3380
fivefold rust has settled on the mirror (of his heart)

The coats of rust have began to eat his iron (mirror) the rust has begun to lessen its sheen

When you write upon white paper, that writing may be read at sight

When you write script over that which has been (already) written, it is not understood the reading of it will be erroneous,

For that (second) blackness has fallen (been made) upon blackness, (hence) both scripts have become obscure and have given no meaning

And if you write a third time on the top of it, then you make 3385
it black as the infidel's soul

What help is there, then, but (to take) refuge with (God) the Helper? Despair is copper, and the elixir for it is (God's) regard

Lay your despairs before Him, that ye may escape from irremediable pain

When Shu'ayb had told him these deep sayings, at that breath of the spirit roses blossomed in his heart

His soul hearkened to the inspiration from Heaven, he said, (however), "If He hath punished me, where is the sign?"

He (Shu'ayb) cried, "O Lord, he rebuts me, he seeks the sign 3390
of that punishment"

He (God) said, "I am the Coverer (of sins) I will not tell his secrets, (I will give) but one indication for the sake of trying him

One sign of My punishing him is this, that he has (to his credit) pious acts of fasting and orison

And ritual prayer and almsgiving *et cetera*, but he has not one atom of spiritual savour

He performs high acts and deeds of devotion, but he has not one atom of (spiritual) relish

His devotions are good (in form), but the spirit is not good 3395
the walnuts are many, but there is no kernel therein"

Spiritual savour is required, in order that devotions may yield fruit a kernel is required, in order that the berry may produce a tree

How shall a berry without kernel become a sapling? The soulless form is naught but phantasy

Remainder of the story of the stranger's reviling the Shaykh

That malign wretch was gabbling silly nonsense about the Shaykh the squinting (envious) man is always of distorted understanding

(He said), "I saw him amidst a company (of revellers) he is one denuded and destitute of piety

And if you do not believe it, arise (and go) to-night, that you may see plainly your Shaykh's depravity "

At night he took him to a window and said, "Behold a (fine) debauch and merry-making!

Behold such hypocrisy by day and profligacy by night!—in the daytime (he is) like Muṣṭafá (Mohammed), at night (like) Bú Lahab

By day his name has become 'Abdullah (the servant of God), by night—God save us! And (see), the wine-cup in his hand!"

He (the disciple) saw a full glass in the Shaykh's hand "O Shaykh," said he, "is there a tumour even in thee?

Nonne dicebas?—'In vini poculo mingit Diabolus festinans lente' "

He (the Shaykh) replied, "They have made my cup so full that there is not room in it for a single rue-seed

Look, is there any room here for a single mote? A deluded man has wrongly apprehended this matter "

This is not the apparent cup (or) the apparent wine deem this (allegation) far from (far below the dignity of) the Shaykh who sees the Unseen

The wine-cup, O fool, is the being of the Shaykh, in qua (essentia) urina Diaboli non continetur

He is full and brimming with the Light of God he has shattered the bodily cup, he is the Absolute Light

If sunlight fall upon filth, it is the same light (still) it suffers no defilement

The Shaykh said, "Indeed this is not a cup, nor (is this) wine Hey, unbeliever, come down and look at it!"

He came, and saw it was fine honey That miserable enemy (of God) became blind (with shame and confusion)

Thereupon the Pír said to his disciple, "Go, seek wine for me, O noble sir,

For I have a pain, I am reduced to necessity because of the pain, I have passed beyond starvation[1]

In sore need any carcase is clean (lawful to eat)—may curses fall like dust[2] on the head of him that denies it!"

The disciple went round the wine-cellar, tasting of every jar on the Shaykh's behalf

In all the wine-cellars (that he visited) he found no wine the jars of wine had become full of honey

He said, "O topers, what state of things is this? What is the matter? I find no wine in any jar "

All the topers came to that Shaykh, weeping and beating their heads with their hands

[1] Literally, "the condition of one whose stomach is empty "
[2] Literally, "may the dust of execration be "

(They said), "Thou camest into the tavern, O most exalted Shaykh, and in consequence of thy coming all the wines have turned to honey

Thou hast changed the wine (and purified it) from filth change our souls also (and purify them) from defilement!"

If the (whole) world be filled to the brim with blood, how should the servant of God drink aught but what is hallowed?

How 'Á'isha—may God be well-pleased with her!—said to Muṣṭafa (Mohammed), on whom be peace, "Thou performest the prayer anywhere, without a prayer-carpet"

One day 'Á'isha said to the Prophet, "O Messenger of Allah, openly and secretly

Thou performest a prayer in whatever place thou mayst find, 3425
(even whilst) unclean and low (people) are running about in the house,

(Quanquam) femina cui fluit sanguis post menstruorum dies vel infans vel (quivis) inquinatus et sordidus facit usu tritum (pollutum) quemcunque locum advenerit"

The Prophet said, "Know that God makes impure (things) pure for the (spiritually) great

On that account the grace of God has made my place of worship to be pure (everywhere, even) up to the seventh tier (of Heaven)"

Beware and beware! Cease from envying the (spiritual) kings, else you will become a devil in the world

For if he drink poison, it turns to honey, (but) if you eat 3430
honey, it is poison (to you),

For he has been changed, and his action has been changed he has become the Grace (of God), and every fire in him has been turned into Light

The *abábíl* (swifts) had the power of God (in them), else, how should a bird kill an elephant?

A number of little birds broke an (entire) army—so that you may know that that strength is from God

If temptation of this kind[1] come to you, go, read the *Súra* concerning the Possessors of the Elephant

And if you contend and engage in rivalry with him (the saint), 3435
deem me an infidel if you save your head from them[2]

[1] *I e* envy Cf v 3429
[2] *I e* the saints will punish you

How the mouse pulled (the rope attached to) the camel's nose-ring and became self-conceited

A little mouse caught in his forelegs a camel's leading-rope and from emulation went off (with it)

By reason of the readiness with which the camel set out along with him, the mouse was duped into thinking himself a hero

The ray of his thought struck the camel He (the camel) said (aside), "I will show thee (presently)! Enjoy thyself!"

(All went well) till he (the mouse) came to the bank of a great river, at which any lion or wolf would have lost heart[1].

There the mouse stopped and became paralysed[2] The camel said, "O my companion o'er hill and plain,

What is this standing still (for)? Why art thou dismayed? Step (forward) like a man! Go into the river!

Thou art my guide and leader don't halt midway and be dumbfounded!"

He (the mouse) said, "This is a huge and deep river I am afraid of being drowned, O comrade"

Said the camel, "Let me see the limit (depth) of the water," and he quickly set foot in it

"The water," he said, "is (only) up to the knee O blind mouse, wherefore didst thou become dismayed and lose thy wits?"

He (the mouse) replied, "It is (as) an ant to you, but to me it is a dragon, for there are differences between one knee and another

If it is (only) up to your knee, O excellent one, it is a hundred ells higher than the crown of my head"

He (the camel) said, "Another time, do not behave (so) boldly, lest thy body and soul be consumed by these sparks

Contend with mice like thyself a mouse has nothing to say to a camel"

He (the mouse) said, "I repent For God's sake, get me across this deadly water!"

The camel took pity "Hark," said he, "jump up and sit on my hump

This passage has been vouchsafed to me I would take across hundreds of thousands like thee"

Since you are not a prophet, go on the road (after the prophets), that one day you may come from the pit (of fleshliness) to (spiritual) place and power

Be a vassal since you are not a lord do not steer (the boat) yourself, since you are not the boatman

Since you are not (spiritually) perfect, do not take a shop (by

[1] Literally, "would have become helpless"
[2] Literally, "dry"

yourself) alone Be pliant to the hand, in order that you may become leavened (like dough)

Give ear to (the Divine command), "*Keep silence,*" be mute, since you have not become the tongue (mouthpiece) of God, be an ear

And if you speak, speak in the form of a request for explanation speak to the (spiritual) emperors as a lowly beggar

The beginning of pride and hatred is in (worldly) lust, and the rootedness of your lust is from habit

When an evil disposition becomes confirmed by habit, you are enraged with any one who restrains you

After you have become an eater of clay, any one who restrains 3460
you from (eating) clay is your enemy

Since idolaters are accustomed to the idol, they are foes to them that stop the way to the idol

Since Iblís had become accustomed to being leader, he looked on Adam with disbelief (and denial),

Saying, "Is there another leader superior to me, so that he should be worshipped by one like me?"

Leadership is poison, except to the spirit that from the beginning hath (in himself) abundance of the antidote[1]

If the mountain is full of snakes, have no fear, for it is a mine 3465
of antidote within

When leadership has become a bosom-friend to your brain[2], any one who breaks (thwarts) you becomes (as) an ancient adversary

When any one contradicts your disposition (habit of mind), many feelings of hatred against him arise in you

"He is tearing me (you say) from my (engrained) disposition, he is making me a pupil and follower (of himself)"

Unless the evil disposition has become strongly implanted, how should the fire-temple (of passion) blaze up through being opposed?

He may show some feigned courtesy to the opponent, he may 3470
make a place for himself in his heart[3],

(But he really hates him), because the evil disposition has waxed strong the ant of (worldly) lust has through habit become as a snake

Kill the snake of lust at the beginning, else, look you, your snake is become a dragon

But every one deems his own snake an ant do you (then) seek the explanation of yourself (your real state) from him that is lord of the heart

Until copper becomes gold, it does not know itself to be

[1] Literally, "is a place abounding in the antidote"
[2] *I e* haunts your brain
[3] *I e* "he may seek to win his favour by flattering him"

copper until the heart becomes a king, it does not know itself to be an insolvent

3475 Do service to the elixir, like copper endure oppression, O heart, from him that holds the heart in fee

Who is it that holds the heart in fee? Know well, it is the lords of the heart who, like day and night, are recoiling from the world

Do not find fault with the Servant of God do not suspect the King of being a thief

The miracles of the dervish who was suspected of theft in a ship

A dervish was in a ship he had made a bolster (for himself) from the goods of saintly fortitude[1]

A purse of gold was lost He was asleep (at the time) They searched all (in the ship) and brought him also to view[2],

3480 Saying, "Let us search this sleeping mendicant as well" (So) the owner of the money, (excited) by grief, awakened him

"A bag of valuables," said he, "has been lost in this ship We have searched the whole company you cannot escape (suspicion)

Put off your dervish-cloak, strip yourself of it, in order that the people's suspicions may be cleared away from you[3]"

He cried, "O Lord, these vile wretches have made an accusation against Thy slave bring Thy command to pass!"

When the heart of the dervish was pained by that (suspicion), at once there put forth their heads on every side

3485 From the deep sea myriads of fishes, and in the mouth of each (was) a superb pearl

Myriads of fishes out of the full sea, each with a pearl in its mouth—and what (marvellous) pearls!—

Every pearl the revenue of a kingdom "These," they said (to him), "are from God, they have no association (with any one but God)"

He dropped a quantity of pearls on the ship and sprang (aloft) he made the air his high-seat and sate (thereon),

(Resting) at ease, cross-legged, as kings upon their thrones—he above the zenith, and the ship before him

3490 He said, "Begone! The ship for you, God for me, so that a beggarly thief may not be with you!

Let us see who will be the loser[4] by this separation! I am

[1] Literally, "manliness" or "the quality of a (holy) man"

[2] I take *namud* as equivalent to *namudand* This archaic construction occurs elsewhere in the *Mathnawi* Cf p 249, note 1

[3] Literally, "freed from concern with you"

[4] Literally, "to whom will be the loss"

pleased, (being) paired (united) with God and singled (isolated) from (His) creatures

He does not accuse me of theft, He does not hand me over to (the mercy of) an informer[1]."

The people in the ship cried out, "O noble chief, wherefore has such a high estate been given to thee?"

He answered, "For throwing suspicion on dervishes and offending God on account of a despicable thing (as ye have done)!

God forbid! Nay, (it was) for showing reverence to (the spiritual) kings, inasmuch as I did not conceive ill thoughts against dervishes—

Those gracious dervishes of sweet breath (pure spirit), for whose magnification (the chapter of the Qur'án entitled) *'Abasa* was revealed."

That dervishhood is not for the sake of (avoiding) entanglement (with the world), no, (it is) because nothing exists but God.

How should I hold in suspicion those whom God hath entrusted with the treasury of the Seventh Heaven?

The fleshly soul is suspect, not the sublime Reason: the senses are suspect, not the subtle Light.

The fleshly soul is a sophist: beat it constantly, for beating does it good, not arguing with it.

It sees a miracle (wrought by a prophet), and at the moment it glows (with belief), (but) afterwards it says, "'Twas (only) a phantasy,

For if that wondrous sight had been real, then it would have been abiding, day and night, in the eye."

It *is* abiding in the eyes of the pure, (but) it does not haunt[2] the eyes of animals (sensual men),

For the miracle is ashamed and scornful of these (bodily) senses: how should a peacock be (confined) in a narrow pit?

Take heed not to call me garrulous: I say (only) one in a hundred, and that (one) like a hair.

How some Súfís abused a certain Súfí, saying that he talked too much in the presence of the Shaykh.

Some Súfís abused a certain Súfí, and came to the Shaykh of the convent,

And said to the Shaykh, "Demand justice for our souls from this Súfí, O Guide!"

He said, "Why, what is the complaint, O Súfís?" He (their spokesman) replied, "This Súfí has three annoying habits.

In speech he is garrulous as a bell, in eating he eats more than twenty persons,

[1] Literally, "does not give my leading-rope to an informer."
[2] Literally, "become attached to."

3510 And if he sleep, he is like the Men of the Cave" (Thus) did the Súfís march to war[1] (against him) before the Shaykh

The Shaykh turned his face towards that dervish, saying, "In every case that exists, take the middle (course)

(It is stated) in Tradition that the best things are the mean (those between the two extremes) the (four) humours are beneficial through being in equipoise

If by accident (any) one humour become excessive, disease appears in the human body

Do not exceed in (any) quality him that is thy yoke-fellow, for that will assuredly bring about separation (between you) in the end

3515 The speech of Moses was in measure, but even so it exceeded the words of his good friend

That excess resulted in (his) opposing Khadir, and he (Khadir) said, 'Go, thou art one that talks too much *this is a (cause of) separation (between us)*'

O (thou who resemblest) Moses, thou art garrulous Go far off, or else be dumb with me and blind!

And if thou goest not, but remainest sitting (here) in despite (of me), thou art gone in reality and severed (from my company)"

When suddenly you commit an act of (legal) impurity in the ritual prayer, it (the prayer) says to you, "Go speedily to purify yourself",

3520 And if you go not, you will be moving (exerting yourself) in vain, verily your prayer is gone (is void) sit down, O misguided man!

Go to them that are your mates, (them) that are enamoured of your discourse and thirsting for it

One who keeps watch is superior to those who slumber the (spiritual) fish have no need of one who keeps watch

Those who wear clothes look to the launderer, (but) the soul of the naked hath (Divine) illumination as its adornment

Either withdraw (and turn) aside from the naked, or like them become free from body-garments

3525 And if you cannot become wholly naked, make your garments less, so that you may tread the middle path

How the dervish excused himself to the Shaykh

Then the dervish told the Shaykh how the case stood, and coupled excuses with the discharge of that obligation

To the Shaykh's questions he gave answer good and right, like the answers of Khadir—

(Namely) those answers to the questions of Moses which Khadir, (inspired) by the all-knowing Lord, set forth to him,

[1] *I e* "made a disturbance and uproar"

(So that) his difficulties became solved, and he (Khadir) gave to him (Moses) the key to every question (in a way) beyond telling

The dervish also had (a spiritual) inheritance from Khadir, (hence) he bent his will to answering the Shaykh

He said, "Although the middle path is (the way of) wisdom, yet the middle path too is relative

Relatively to a camel, the water in the stream is little, but to a mouse it is like the ocean

If any one has an appetite for four loaves and eats two or three, that is the mean,

But if he eat all the four, it is far from the mean he is in bondage to greed, like a duck

If one has appetite for ten loaves and eats six, know that that is the mean

When I have appetite for fifty loaves, and you for (no more than) six scones, we are not equivalent

You may be tired by ten *rak'as* (of prayer), I may not be worn thin by five hundred

One goes bare-foot (all the way) to the Ka'ba, and one becomes beside himself (with exhaustion in going) as far as the mosque

One in utter self-devotion gives his life, one is agonised at giving a single loaf

This mean belongs to (the realm of) the finite, for that (finite) has a beginning and end

A beginning and end are necessary in order that the mean or middle (point) between them may be conceived in imagination

Inasmuch as the infinite has not (these) two limits, how should the mean be applicable to it[1]?

No one has shown it to have beginning or end He (God) said, '*If the sea were to become ink for it* (*the Word of God*) '

If the Seven Seas should become entirely ink, (still) there is no hope of coming to an end

If orchards and forests should become pens altogether, there would never be any decrease in this Word[2]

All that ink and (all those) pens pass away, and this numberless Word is everlasting

At times my state resembles sleep a misguided person may think it is sleep

Know that my eyes are asleep, (but) my heart is awake know that my (seemingly) inactive form is (really) in action

The Prophet said, 'My eyes sleep, (but) my heart is not asleep to the Lord of created beings '

[1] Literally, "how should the mean be that to which it (the infinite) is referred?"

[2] *I e* "no progress would be made in defining it "

3550 Your eyes are awake, and your heart is sunk in slumber, my eyes are asleep, (but) my heart is in (contemplation of) the opening of the door (of Divine grace)

My heart hath five senses other (than the physical) both the worlds (external and spiritual) are the stage (theatre) for the senses of the heart

Do not regard me from (the standpoint of) your infirmity to you 'tis night, to me that same night is morningtide

To you 'tis prison, to me that prison is like a garden to me the most absolute state of occupation (with the world) has become (a state of spiritual) freedom

Your feet are in the mud, to me the mud has become roses You have mourning, I have feasting and drums

3555 (Whilst) I am dwelling with you in some place on the earth, I am coursing over the seventh sphere (of Heaven), like Saturn

'Tis not I that am seated beside you, 'tis my shadow my rank is higher than (the reach of) thoughts,

Because I have passed beyond (all) thoughts, and have become a swift traveller outside (the region of) thought

I am the ruler of thought, not ruled (by it), because the builder is ruler over the building

All creatures are subjugated to thought, for that reason they are sore in heart and practised in sorrow

3560 I yield myself to thought purposely, (but) when I will I spring up from the midst of them (that are under its sway)

I am as a bird of the zenith, thought is a gnat how should a gnat have power over me?

Purposely I come down from the lofty zenith, that those of base degree may attain to me

When disgust at the qualities of the low (world) seizes me, I soar up like *the birds which spread their pinions*

My wings have grown out of my very essence I do not stick two wings on with glue

3565 The wings of Ja'far-i Tayyár are permanent, the wings of Ja'far-i 'Ayyár are borrowed (unreal and transitory)

In the view of him that has not experienced (it), this is (mere) pretension, in the view of the inhabitants of the (spiritual) horizon, this is the reality

This is brag and pretension in the eyes of the crow an empty or full pot is all one to the fly

When morsels of food become (changed to) pearls within you, do not forbear eat as much as you can "

One day the Shaykh, in order to rebut (these) ill thoughts, vomited in a basin, and the basin became full of pearls

3570 On account of the (abusive) man's little understanding, the clairvoyant Pír made the intelligible pearls objects of sense-perception

When pure (lawful food) turns to impurity in your stomach, put a lock upon your gullet and hide the key,

(But) any one in whom morsels of food become the light of (spiritual) glory, let him eat whatever he will, it is lawful to him

Explaining (that there are) some assertions the truth of which is attested by their very nature

If you are my soul's familiar friend, my words full of (real) meaning are not (mere) assertion

If at midnight I say, "I am near you come now, be not afraid of the night, for I am your kinsman,"

These two assertions are to you reality, since you recognise the voice of your own relative

Nearness and kinship were (only) two assertions, but both (of them) were reality to the good understanding

The proximity of the voice gives him (the hearer) testimony that these words spring from a friend[1],

Moreover, (his) delight at (hearing) the voice of his kinsman has borne witness to the truthfulness of that dear relative

Again, the uninspired fool who in his ignorance does not know a stranger's voice from a kinsman's—

To him his (the speaker's) words are (mere) assertion his ignorance has become the source of his disbelief,

(But) to him of keen insight, within whom are the (spiritual) lights, the very nature of this voice was just the (immediate evidence of its) reality

Or (for example) one whose mother-tongue is Arabic says in Arabic, "I know the language of the Arabs"

The very fact of his speaking in Arabic is (evidence of) the reality (of his assertion), although his saying (that he knows) Arabic is (only) an assertion

Or a writer may write on a piece of paper, "I am a writer and a reader, and I am a most accomplished person."

Although this written (statement) itself is a (mere) assertion, still the script is evidence of the reality (of the assertion)

Or a Súfí may say, "Last night, while asleep, you saw some one with a prayer-carpet on his shoulder

That was I, and what I said to you in the dream, whilst you slumbered, in explanation of clairvoyance—

Give ear (to it), put it in your ear like an ear-ring make those words (of mine) your mind's guide"

[1] نزدیک, with *izáfat* The point is, not that the friend is near at hand (which is obvious), but that the nearness of his voice enables the listener to recognise him as a friend and verify his statement

When you recollect the dream, these words (of his) are (as real to you as) a new miracle or old gold

3590 Although this seems to be (mere) assertion (on his part), yet the soul of the dreamer says, "Yes, (it is true)"

Therefore, since Wisdom is the faithful believer's stray camel, he knows it with certainty, from whomsoever he has heard it;

And when he finds himself absolutely in front of it, how should there be doubt? How should he mistake himself?

When you say to a thirsty man, "Make haste! there is water in the cup take the water at once,"

Will the thirsty man say in any event?—"This is (mere) assertion go from my side, O pretender! Get thee far away!

3595 Or (else) produce some testimony and proof that this is of aqueous kind and consists of the *water that runs from a spring*

Or (suppose that) a mother cries to her suckling babe, "Come, I am mother hark, my child!"—

Will the babe say?—"O mother, bring the proof (of it), so that I may take comfort in thy milk"

When in the heart of any community there is savour (spiritual perception) from God, the face and voice of the prophet are (as) an evidentiary miracle

When the prophet utters a cry from without, the soul of the community falls to worship within,

3600 Because never in the world will the soul's ear have heard from any one a cry of the same kind as his

That stranger (the soul), by immediate perception of the strange (wondrous) voice, has heard from God's tongue (the words), "*Verily I am near*"

How Yahya[1], *on whom be peace, in his mother's womb bowed in worship to the Messiah (Jesus), on whom be peace*

The mother of Yahyá, before disburdening herself (of him), said in secret to Mary,

"I see (it) with certainty, within thee is a King who is possessed of firm purpose and is an Apostle endowed with knowledge (of God)

When I happened to meet thee, my burden (the unborn child) at once bowed in worship

3605 This embryo bowed in worship to that embryo, so that pain arose in my body from its bowing"

Mary said, "I also felt within me a bowing performed by this babe in the womb"

[1] John the Baptist

On raising a difficulty as to this story

The foolish say, "Cancel this tale, because it is false and erroneous

Mary in (her) pregnancy was not joined (met) by any one she did not return from without the town

Until that woman of sweet address was delivered outside of the town, she indeed came not into it

When she had given birth to him, she then took him up in her lap and carried him to her kinsfolk

Where did the mother of Yahyá see her to speak these words to her about what had happened?"

The answer to the difficulty

Let him (the objector) know that to one who receives ideas (from God) all that is absent in the world is present

To Mary, the mother of Yahyá would appear present, though she was far from her (bodily) sight

One may see a friend (even) with eyes shut, when one has made the skin (the bodily envelope) a lattice (to let in spiritual ideas)

And if she saw her neither from without nor from within, take the (essential) meaning of the story, O imbecile!

Not like him who had heard (some) fables, and like *sh* stuck to the (literal) *sh*ape of them[1],

So that he would say, "How should Kalíla, having no language, hear words from Dimna who had no power of expression?

And (even) if they knew each other's accents, how should man understand it (their talk), (since it was) without any articulation?

How did Dimna become a messenger between the lion and the ox, and cajole them both with his palaver[2]?

How did the noble ox become the vizier of the lion? How was the elephant terrified by the reflection of the moon?

This *Kalíla and Dimna* is entirely fiction, or else how has the stork a quarrel with the crow?"

O brother, the story is like a measure the real meaning in it resembles grain (in the measure)

The man of intelligence will take the grain of meaning he will not pay any regard to the measure, (even) if it is removed (altogether)

Listen to what passes between the rose and the nightingale, though in that case there is no overt speech

[1] The simile in the Persian is "like *shin* stuck to the *naqsh* of them," *shin* being the final letter of the word *naqsh*

[2] Literally, "pronounce spells over them both?"

On mute eloquence[1] and the understanding of it

3625 Listen also to what passes between the moth and the candle, and pick out the meaning, O worshipful one[2]

Albeit there is no speech, there is the inmost soul of speech Come, fly aloft, do not fly low, like the owl

He (the player) at chess said, "This is the house of the rook " "By what way," said he (the literalist), "did the house come into its hands?

Did it buy the house, or inherit it?"—Happy is he that sped towards the (real) meaning!

A grammarian said, "Zayd has struck 'Amr " Said (the fool), "How did he chastise him without any offence (on his part)?

3630 What was 'Amr's offence, that that rude Zayd struck him, innocent (though he was), as (if he were) a slave?"

He (the grammarian) replied, "This (form of words) is (only) the measure (container) of the meaning signified take some wheat, for the measure is (to be) rejected

Zayd and 'Amr are a device for (showing) the declension if that (statement that Zayd struck 'Amr) is untrue, make up with the declension[3] "

"Nay," said he, "I don't know about that How did Zayd strike 'Amr without (his committing any) crime or fault?"

He (the grammarian) in desperation started a joke and said, "'Amr had stolen a superfluous *wáw*[4]

3635 Zayd became aware, and struck the stealer of it since he ('Amr) carried it beyond bounds (transgressed the law), the punishment serves him right "

How worthless sayings find acceptance in the minds of worthless folk

He (the fool) said, "Here you are, this is the truth! I accept (it) with (all) my soul " Wrong seems right to the wrong-minded

If you say to a squinting man, "The moon is one," he will say to you, "These are two (moons), and there is a (great) doubt as to (the moon's) being one",

And if somebody laughs at him and says, "There are two," he deems it the truth This (mockery) is what the ill-natured (ignorant and contumacious) fellow deserves

[1] Literally, "on speaking with the tongue of the (inward) state "
[2] Literally, "O idol "
[3] *I e* "let the instruction conveyed by means of the statement reconcile and satisfy you "
[4] In Arabic the name 'Amr is written 'Amrw, in order to distinguish it from the name 'Umar, with which it would otherwise be identical as far as the consonants are concerned

Lies muster round (those who are living) lies (the text) *the wicked women for the wicked men* has thrown light (upon this point)

They whose hearts are (opened) wide (to receive spiritual 3640
truths) have wide (far-reaching) hands[1], they whose (spiritual) eyes are blind have to stumble on stony ground

On seeking the tree whereof none that eats the fruit shall die

A learned man (once) said, for the sake of (telling) a story, "In India there is a certain tree

Whoso takes and eats[2] of its fruit, he grows not old nor ever dies"

A king heard this (tale) from a veracious person he became a lover of the tree and its fruit

From the Divan of culture he sent an intelligent envoy to India in search (of it)

For (many) years his envoy wandered about India in quest 3645
(of the tree)

He roamed from town to town for this object neither island nor mountain nor plain was left (unvisited)

Every one whom he asked made a mock of him, saying, "Who would search after this, unless perhaps a madman in confinement?"

Many slapped him jocosely, many said, "O fortunate man,

How should the enquiry of a clever and clear-minded person like you be devoid (of result)? How should it be vain?"

And this (ironical) respect was to him another slap, and it 3650
was harder (to bear) than the visible slap

They extolled him sarcastically, saying, "O great sir, in such and such a place there is a very huge tree

In such and such a forest there is a green tree, very tall and broad, and every branch of it is big"

The king's envoy, who had braced his belt for the quest, was hearing a different kind of report from every one,

So he travelled there for years, (whilst) the king kept sending money to him

After he had suffered much fatigue in that foreign land, at 3655
last he became too exhausted to seek (any longer)

No trace of the object of pursuit was discovered of what he wanted nothing appeared but the report

The thread of his hope snapped, the thing he had sought became unsought in the end

He resolved to return to the king, (and set out) shedding tears and traversing the way.

[1] *I e* they enjoy spiritual power and freedom
[2] Literally, "eats and takes"

How the Shaykh explained the hidden meaning of the tree to the seeker who was in the bondage of formalism

There was a wise Shaykh, a noble Qutb, at the halting-place where the king's intimate fell into despair

3660 He (the envoy) said, "Being without hope, I will go to him, and set out on the road (again) from his threshold,

In order that his prayer (blessing) may accompany me, since I have no hope of (winning) my heart's desire"

With tearful eyes he went to the Shaykh he was raining tears, like a cloud

"O Shaykh," he cried, "it is the time for mercy and pity; I am in despair now is the time for kindness"

He (the Shaykh) said, "Say plainly what is the cause of thy despair what is thy object? what hast thou in view[1]?"

3665 He answered, "The Emperor chose me out to seek a certain branching tree,

For there is a tree, unique in (all) the quarters (of the world): its fruit is (of) the substance of the Water of Life

I have sought (it) for years and seen no sign (of it) except the gibes and ridicule of these merry men"

The Shaykh laughed and said to him, "O simpleton, this is the tree of knowledge in the sage—

Very high and very grand and very far-spreading (it is) a Water of Life from the all-encompassing Sea (of God)

3670 Thou hast gone after the form, thou hast gone astray thou canst not find (it) because thou hast abandoned the reality

Sometimes it is named 'tree,' sometimes 'sun', sometimes it is named 'sea,' sometimes 'cloud'

(It is) that one (thing) from which a hundred thousand effects arise its least effects are everlasting life

Although (in essence) it is single, it hath a thousand effects innumerable names befit (may be properly applied to) that one (thing)

One person may be father in relation to thee, in regard to another individual he may be son

3675 In regard to another he may be wrath and a foe, in regard to another he may be graciousness and a friend

(He hath) hundreds of thousands of names, (but) he is one man the owner of every quality belonging to him is blind to (incapable of) giving any (true) description (of him)

Whoever seeks the (mere) name, if he is entrusted (with a confidential mission) he is hopeless and in distraction, even as thou art

Why dost thou stick to the name 'tree,' so that thou art left bitterly disappointed and ill-fortuned?

[1] Literally, "towards what is thy face (turned)?"

Pass on from the name and look at the attributes, in order that the attributes may show thee the way to the essence "

The disagreement of mankind is caused by names peace ensues when they advance to the reality (denoted by the name)

How four persons quarrelled about grapes, which were known to each of them by a different name

A certain man gave a dirhem to four persons one of them (a Persian) said, "I will spend this on *angúr* "

The second one was an Arab he said, "No, I want *'inab*, not *angúr*, O rascal!"

The third was a Turk, and he said, "This (money) is mine I don't want *'inab*, I want *uzum* "

The fourth, a Greek, said, "Stop this talk I want *istafíl* "

These people began fighting in contention with one another, because they were unaware of the hidden meaning of the names

In their folly they smote each other with their fists they were full of ignorance and empty of knowledge

If a master of the esoteric had been there, a revered and many-languaged man, he would have pacified them,

And then he would have said, "With this one dirhem I will give all of you what ye wish

When without deceit ye surrender your hearts (to me), this dirhem will do all this for you

Your one dirhem will become four[1]—the result desired four enemies will become one through unanimity[2]

What each one of you says produces strife and separation, what I say brings you agreement

Therefore be ye mute, *keep silence*, that I may be your tongue in speech and talk "

(Even) if in their agreement with each other your words are (as) a strong rope, in effect they are a source of contention and distraction

Borrowed (accidental) heat produces no (essential) effect, natural heat hath (its own) virtue

If you have made vinegar hot by means of fire, (still) when you drink it, it will undoubtedly increase the coldness (of your constitution),

Because that (artificially produced) heat of it is exotic[3] its fundamental nature is coldness and tartness

And (on the other hand), though grape-syrup be frozen, my son, it will add heat to the liver when you drink it

Hence the Shaykh's hypocrisy is better than our sincerity,

[1] *I e* "will serve to gratify the wishes of all the four "
[2] Literally, "Einswerden "
[3] Literally, "belonging to the outer hall "

for the former arises from (spiritual) insight, while the latter arises from (spiritual) blindness

From the Shaykh's discourse comes union (concord), the words of the envious bring separation (discord)

3700 As (for example) Solomon, who sped (on his prophetic mission) from God, and who knew the language of all birds—

In the time of his just sway the deer made friends with the leopard and ceased from war

The dove became secure from the talons of the hawk, the sheep took no precaution against the wolf

He (Solomon) became an arbitrator between enemies he became a (means of establishing) oneness between the creatures that fly with wings

Thou art running after grain, like an ant Hark! seek for Solomon! Why art thou still astray?

3705 To the seeker of grain his grain becomes a snare, but the seeker of Solomon may have both (Solomon and the grain)

In these latter days the soul-birds have no security from each other for a moment,

(Yet) even in our epoch there is a Solomon who would give (us) peace and not suffer our injustice to continue

Call to mind (the text), *There is no people* down to (the words) *but in the past a warner dwelt among them*

God said that verily there has never been a people devoid of a vicar of God and a man of spiritual power,

3710 And he makes the soul-birds so unanimous that, in respect of sincerity, he purges them of (all) guile and rancour

They become (as) kind as a mother he (Mohammed) said of the Moslems, "(They are as) one soul"

('Twas) through the Messenger of Allah they became one soul, else, they were absolute enemies, every one (to the other)

How dissension and enmity amongst the Ansár were removed by the blessings of the Prophet—may God bless and save him!

The two tribes which were named Aws and Khazraj had a blood-thirsty spirit towards each other

Through (the preaching of) Mustafá (Mohammed) their ancient feuds vanished in the light of Islam and of pureness (of heart)

3715 First, those enemies became brethren like the units of (a bunch of) grapes in the garden,

And (then) at the admonition given in the words[1], *The true believers are brethren*, they dissolved (and mingled) and became one body

[1] Or, if the reading بسجل be adopted, "in consequence of the binding obligation involved in the words"

The appearance of the (clustered) grapes is (that of) brethren when you squeeze them they become one juice

The immature and the full-grown grape are opponents, but when the immature grape has ripened, it becomes a good friend

The immature grape that has remained stone-hard and crude —God in eternity has called it an original unbeliever

He (such a one) is neither a brother nor one (in) soul (with the faithful Moslems) he is an ill-starred heretic in (the state of) damnation

If I should tell that which he keeps hidden (in his heart), there would arise in the world a sore temptation of (men's) minds

'Tis better that the secret of the blind infidel should be untold 'tis better that the smoke of Hell should be banished from Iram

The good immature grapes, which are capable (of ripening), are at last (made) one in heart by the breath of the masters of heart (the saints)

They push on rapidly to grapehood (maturity), so that duality and hatred and strife depart (from them)

Then in grapehood they rend their skins till they become one unity is the (proper) attribute of him (who is one with others)

A friend becomes a foe because he is still two is any one (engaged) in a quarrel with himself?

Blessings on the universal love of the Master, (which) gave oneness to hundreds of thousands of motes!

(They were) as dust scattered on the thoroughfare the hand of the Potter made them one jug

(But the simile fails as applied to souls), for the oneness of bodies (formed) of water and clay is imperfect the (oneness of) soul is not like this

If I should here utter similitudes in comparison (illustration), I fear it might disorder (perplex) the understanding

Even now there exists (a) Solomon, but we are blinded by exulting in (our) far-sightedness

Far-sightedness keeps a man blind, just as one sleeping in a house is blind to the house

We are much addicted to subtle discussions, we are exceedingly fond of solving problems,

And to the end that we may tie knots and (then) undo them, (we are) making many rules for (posing and stating) the difficulty and for answering (the questions raised by it),

Like a bird which should undo the fastenings of a snare, and tie (them together) at times, in order that it might become perfect in skill

It is deprived of the open country and meadowland, its life is spent in dealing with knots,

And even (then) the snare is nowise subdued by it, but its wings are always getting broken

Do not struggle with knots, lest thy wings and feathers be snapped asunder one by one through this vain display (of effort) on thy part

Myriads of birds have had their wings broken, and have not stopped that calamitous ambuscade[1] (from doing its work)

3740 Read in the Qur'án (concerning) their state, O covetous one —*They explored* (*and wandered*) *in them* (*the lands of the earth*), mark (the words), *Was there any refuge?*

The difficulty over *angúr* and *'inab* was not solved by the contest between the Turk, the Greek, and the Arab

Until the spiritual Solomon, skilled in tongues, shall intervene, this duality will not disappear

O all ye wrangling birds, hearken, like the falcon, to this falcon-drum of the King

Hark, from every quarter set out with joy, (flying away) from your diversity towards oneness

3745 *Wheresoever ye be, turn your faces towards it*[2] this is the thing which He hath not forbidden unto you (at any time)

Blind birds are we and very inept, in that we have not once recognised that Solomon

Like the owls, we have become hostile to the falcons consequently we are left behind (to dwell) in the place of ruin

Because of (our) extreme ignorance and blindness we are seeking to hurt those honoured of God

How should the flock of birds which are enlightened by Solomon tear out the wings and plumes of the innocent?

3750 Nay, they would bring grain to the helpless ones gentle are those birds and without pugnacity or hatred

Their hoopoe, for the sake of glorifying (Solomon), unfolds the way (towards Him) to a hundred like Bilqís

Their crow, (even) if it was a crow in outward aspect, was (really) a falcon in aspiration and (one whose gaze) *turned not aside*

Their stork, which cries *lak lak*[3], casts upon doubt (and disbelief) the fire of the profession of Unity,

And their dove is not scared by hawks the hawk lays his head (in homage) before their dove

3755 Their nightingale, which throws thee into ecstasy, hath the rose-garden in its heart

Their parrot was (always) independent of sugar, for the sugar of everlastingness showed its face (was revealed) to it from within

[1] Literally, "that place where the (predestined) events lie in ambush"
[2] Qur'án, II, 139 and 145, slightly altered
[3] Cf Book II, verse 1662

The feet of their peacocks are fairer to see than (all) others in peacock's plumage

The speeches of princely birds[1] are (meaningless as) an echo where is the speech of the birds of Solomon?

How wilt thou know the cries of the birds, when thou hast never seen Solomon for a single moment?

The wings of that bird whose note thrills (them that can hear it) are beyond East and West

Its every course is from the Footstool of God to the earth, and from the earth to the Throne of God it moves in glory and majesty

The bird that goes without this Solomon is in love with darkness, like a bat

Make thyself familiar with Solomon, O reprobate bat, in order that thou mayst not remain in darkness for ever

When thou goest one ell's length in that direction, like the ell thou wilt become the standard of measurement,

And (even by) thy hopping lamely and limply in that direction, thou wilt be freed from all lameness and limpness

The story of the ducklings which were fostered by a domestic fowl

Thou art the offspring of a duck, though a domestic fowl has nursed thee beneath her wing

Thy mother was the duck of that Sea, thy nurse was of the earth and devoted to the dry land

The desire which is in thy heart for the Sea—thy soul hath that nature (instinct) from thy mother

The desire thou hast for the dry land is from this nurse Leave the nurse, for she is an evil counsellor

Leave the nurse on the dry land, and press on come into the Sea of spiritual reality, like the ducks

(Even) if thy mother should bid thee be afraid of the water, fear not thou, but push speedily into the Sea

Thou art a duck thou art one that lives (both) on dry and wet, thou art not one like the domestic fowl, whose house is dug (in the ground)

Thou art a king in virtue of (the text), ***We have ennobled the sons of Adam*** thou settest foot both on the dry land and on the Sea

For in spirit thou art (what is signified by the text), ***We have conveyed them on the Sea*** push forward (then) from (the state implied in the words), ***We have conveyed them on the land***

The angels have no access to the land, the animal kind, again, are ignorant of the Sea

[1] *I e* the great ones of this world

Thou in (thy) body art an animal, and in (thy) spirit thou art of the angels, so that thou mayst walk on the earth and also in the sky,

So that the seer with heart divinely inspired may be, in appearance, *a man like yourselves*

His body of dust (is here), fallen upon the earth, (but) his spirit (is) circling in yonder highest sphere (of Heaven)

We all are water-birds, O lad the Sea fully knows our language

Therefore the Sea is (our) Solomon, and we are as the birds (familiar with Solomon) in Solomon we move unto everlasting

With Solomon set thy foot in the Sea, that the water, David-like, may make a hundred rings of mail (ripples)

That Solomon is present to all, but (His) jealousy binds (our) eyes (with spells) and enchants (us),

So that from folly and drowsiness (forgetfulness) and vanity—He is beside us, and (yet) we are sick of Him

The noise of thunder gives the thirsty man headache, when he does not know that it (the thunder) brings on the rain-clouds of felicity

His eye remains (fixed) upon the running stream, unaware of the delicious taste of the Water of Heaven

He has urged the steed of (his) attention towards (secondary) causes consequently he remains debarred from the Causer

(But) one that sees the Causer plainly—how should he set his mind upon the (secondary) causes in the world?

How the pilgrims were amazed at the miracles of the ascetic whom they found (living) alone in the desert

Amidst the desert lived an ascetic, absorbed in devotion like the people of 'Abbádan[1]

The pilgrims from (different) countries arrived there their eyes fell upon the parched ascetic

The dwelling-place of the ascetic was dry, (but) he was moist in temperament in the simoom of the desert he had a remedy (for his moistness)

The pilgrims were amazed at his solitude and his welfare in the midst of bane

He stood on the sand, (engaged) in the ritual prayer—sand from the heat whereof the water in a pot would boil

You would have said he was (standing) enraptured amongst herbs and flowers, or mounted on Buráq or Duldul[2],

[1] The use of 'Abbádiya for 'Abbádániyya is justified by the fact that 'Abbádán was originally named 'Abbád Cf Yáqut, *Mu'jam al-Buldán*, ed Wüstenfeld, III, 598, 2 foll, and Dozy, *Supplément*, II, 91 (under عبّادانى) The town had a great reputation for asceticism (Yáqút, III, 598, 6 and 17)

[2] See p 187, notes 1 and 2

Or that his feet were on silk and broidered cloths, or that to him the simoom was more pleasant than the zephyr

They (the pilgrims) stood waiting, (whilst) he remained 3795
standing in prayer, (sunk) in long meditation

When the dervish came back (to himself) from (his state of) absorption (in God), one of that company, a man (spiritually) alive and of enlightened mind,

Observed that water was trickling from his hands and face, (and that) his garment was wet with the traces of ablution,

So he asked him, "Whence hast thou water?" He lifted his hand, (indicating) that it came from heaven

He (the pilgrim) said, "Does it come whenever thou wilt, without (any) well and without (any) *rope of palm-fibre*?

Solve our difficulty, O Sultan of the Religion, in order that 3800
thy (spiritual) experience may give us certain faith

Reveal to us one of thy mysteries, that we may cut from our waists the cords (of infidelity)"

He (the ascetic) turned his eyes to heaven, saying, "(O God), answer the prayer of the pilgrims!

I am accustomed to seeking daily bread from above Thou hast opened to me the door from above,

O Thou who from non-spatiality hast brought space into view, and hast made manifest (the fact that) *in heaven is your daily bread*"

In the midst of this orison a fair cloud suddenly appeared, 3805
like a water-bearing elephant,

And began to pour down rain, like water from a water-skin the rain-water settled in the ditch and in the hollows

The cloud kept raining tears, like a water-skin, and the pilgrims all opened their water-skins

One party (among them), in consequence of those marvellous happenings, were cutting the cords (of unbelief) from their waists

The certainty (faith) of another group was on the increase because of this miracle—and God knows best how to guide aright

Another group (were) unreceptive, sour and unripe, eternally 3810
imperfect ones (Here) ends the discourse

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